

# The TATLER

CHRISTMAS NUMBER

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and BYSTANDER

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DECEMBER 24, 1947

Two Shillings  
Vol. CLXXXVI. No. 2424



Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq.  
*presents his compliments*  
**CHRISTMAS**  
1947



## Portraits in Print

# Christmas Medley

**Shakespeare, Mrs. Beeton, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Chaucer, King George V, Joseph Addison, Samuel Pepys, W. M. Thackeray, Washington Irving, William Caxton, P.C. A282 (Westminster), Charles Dickens and many others**



**W**ITH great respect, we beg to present to TATLER readers tributes in prose and verse from some of the wisest of mankind to this time of solemn and happy festival. In tone they differ widely; but in sentiment they are unanimous. This is the Occasion of occasions, the Feast of feasts, and to celebrate it is a task worthy of the whole man, with the animal, conjectural and sympathetic parts of his nature caught up for once into a serene agreement.

**Sir Roger de Coverley on Christmas, by Joseph Addison (1672-1719)**

"I HAVE often thought it happens very well that Christmas should fall out in the middle of the winter. It is the most dead and uncomfortable time of the year, when the poor people would suffer very much from their poverty and cold, if they had not good cheer, warm fires and Christmas gambols to support them. I love to rejoice their poor hearts at this season and to see the whole village merry in my great hall. I allow a double quantity of malt to my small beer, and set it a-running for twelve days for every one that calls for it. I have always a piece of cold beef and mince pie upon the table, and am wonderfully pleased to see my tenants pass away a whole evening in playing their innocent tricks and smutting one another."

Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
This bird of dawning singeth all night long:  
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;  
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,  
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,  
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Marcellus in *Hamlet*, I. i.  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616.)

**Daniel Grub in "The Pickwick Papers"**

"JUST for a few days, I will try to forget that the world is going rapidly from bad to worse. Lest I should seem a wet blanket to the mirth of those less well informed than myself, I will assume, while the Christmas season lasts, a geniality I cannot feel. Afterwards must follow the return to reality, with its present degradation and imminent catastrophes."

CHARLES DICKENS (1812-70).

**Thomas Burke (on the days of coaching)**

"AMONG the other joys of coaching were a broken axle-tree, a broken drag-chain on a hill, broken reins, a broken bridge, a flooded road, and in addition to the natural dangers, you

might meet a serious danger belonging specially to the Christmas season—the danger of a drunken coachman by which the coach might be overturned, or get off its right road, or even, through the coachman's half-blind state, turn round and go the other way."

England was merry England, when  
Old Christmas brought his sports again  
'Twas Christmas brought the mightiest ale;  
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;  
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer  
The poor man's heart through half the year.

Heap on more wood! the wind is chill;  
But let it whistle as it will,  
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.

From "Marmion," by  
SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771-1832).

At Christmas play and make good cheer,  
For Christmas comes but once a year.

THOMAS TUSSEY (1524-80).

**Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) Talks of the Waits**

"NOW mind, neighbours," said Old William, "You two counter-boys keep your ears open to Michael's fingering, and don't ye go straying with the treble part along o' Dick and his set, as ye did last year; and mind this especially when we be in the 'Arise and Hail.' Billy Chimlen, don't you sing so raving mad as you fain would; and all o' ye, whatever ye do, keep from making a great scuffle on the ground when we go in at people's gates; but go quietly, so as to strike up all of a sudden, like spirits."



**Washington Irving (1783-1859) Spends Christmas Dinner at the Hall**

THE table was literally loaded with good cheer, and presented an epitome of country abundance in this season of overflowing larders. A most distinguished post was allotted to "ancient sirloin" as mine host termed it; being as he added, "the standard of our old English hospitality, and a joint of goodly presence, and full of expectation."

High noon above the tamarisks—the sun is hot above us—

As at home the Christmas Day is breaking wan  
They will drink our healths at dinner—

Those who tell us how they love us  
And forget us till another year be gone!

"Christmas in India"

RUDYARD KIPLING (1865-1936).

**Mrs. Beeton's Own Christmas Pudding**

CHRISTMAS pudding (rich) (Pouding de Noel).  
Take  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. moist sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. beef suet, 4 oz. flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. raisins,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. mixed peel, half a grated nutmeg,  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. mixed spice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. ground cinnamon, 1 gill of milk, 1 wineglassful of rum or brandy,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. breadcrumbs,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. sultanas,  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. currants, 1 lemon, 2 oz. desiccated coco-nut or shredded almonds, a pinch of salt, 4 eggs.

METHOD.—Shred the suet, or use shredded. Clean the fruit, stone the raisins, finely shred the mixed peel; peel and chop the lemon rind. Put all the dry ingredients into a basin and mix well. Add the milk, stir in the eggs one at a time, add the rum or brandy and the strained juice of the lemon. Work the whole thoroughly for some minutes, so that the ingredients are well blended. Put the mixture in a well buttered pudding basin, or pudding cloth; if the latter is used it should be buttered or floured.

TIME: Boil for about four hours or steam for at least five hours. Sufficient for eight or nine persons.

Christmas is here:  
Winds whistle shrill,  
Icy and chill,  
Little care we:  
Little we fear  
Weather without,  
Sheltered about  
The Mahogany-Tree.

"The Mahogany-Tree."  
WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811-63).

**P.C. A282, Westminster, December, 1947**

"THIS Christmas will mean my being reunited with my family in Devon at the festive season, for the first time for ten years."

THE Chief Constable has issued a statement declaring that carol singing in the streets by children is illegal, and morally and physically injurious. He appeals to the public to discourage the practice—*Daily Paper*.

God rest you merry gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay;  
The Herald Angels cannot sing,  
The cops arrest them on the wing,  
And warn them of the docketing  
Of anything they say.

God rest you merry gentlemen,  
May nothing you dismay;  
On your reposeful cities lie  
Deep silence, broken only by  
The motor horn's melodious cry,  
The hooter's happy pray.



So when the song of children ceased  
And Herod was obeyed,  
In his high hall Corinthian  
With purple and with peacock's fan,  
Rested that merry gentleman;  
And nothing him dismayed.

"A Christmas Carol"

G. K. CHESTERTON (1874-1936).

From "The Tatler" of Addison's time  
(1672-1719)

"No man of the most rigid virtue giveth offence by an excessive plum-pudding or plum-porridge, because they are the first parts of the dinner."

\* \* \*

Come guard the Christmas-pie,  
That the thief, tho ne'er so sly,  
With his flesh-hooks don't come nigh,  
To catch it,  
From him, who all alone sits there,  
Having his eyes still on his ear,  
To watch it.

ROBERT HERRICK (1868-1938).

\* \* \*

He kept no Christmas-house for once a yeere,  
Each day his boards were fild with Lordly fare :  
He fed a rout of yeomen with his cheer,  
Nor was his bread and beefe kept in with care;  
His wine and beere to strangers were not spare,  
And yet beside to all that hunger greved,  
His gates were ope, and they were there relieved.

"A Maiden's Dream"

ROBERT GREENE (1558-92).

\* \* \*

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men.

"Christmas Bells"

LONGFELLOW (1807-82).

"Is there a Santa Claus?" Frank Church  
(date unknown)

"Nor believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies. . . . Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those which neither children nor men can see. No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives and he lives forever."

Charles Lamb (1775-1834) on Christmas

"It is the happiest time of the year. It is the season of mirth and cold weather. It is the time when Christmas boxes and jokes are given; when mistletoe and red-berried laurel, and soups, and sliding and school boys prevail; when the country is illumined by fired and bright fags; and the town is radiant with laughing children. . . . But look! what thing is this, awful and coloured like the rainbow, blue and red and glistening yellow?"

"Its vest is sky-tinctured! The edges of its garments are like the sun! Is it:

A faery vision

Of some gay creature of the element,  
That in the colours of the rainbow lives,  
And plays o' the plighted clouds?"

"No,—it is the Beadle of St.—'s!"

"How Christmas and consolatory he looks! How redolent of good cheer he is! He is corna-copia—

an abundance! What pudding sleeves!—what a collar, red and like beef-steak, is his. He is a walking refreshment! He looks like a whole parish—full—important—but untaxed."

"A Christmas Message"—Charles Dickens

"MANY merry Christmases, friendships, great accumulation of cheerful recollections, affections on earth, and Heaven at last for all of us."

Caxton (1422-1491) in 1489: "At crystmasse and at ester men ought to go vysit and see his good frende."

Steele (1672-1729), in the "Spectator" 1712:

"The Beadles and Officers have the Impudence at Christmas to ask for their Box."

The Archbishop of Canterbury (1864-1942)

in 1932: "We should try to escape from the troubles that beset us, we shall turn away from the clouds of the world and welcome Christmas."

Charles Dickens, Mr. Pickwick

"THIS," said Mr. Pickwick, looking round him, "this is indeed comfort."

"Our invariable custom," replied Mr. Wardle, "Everybody sits down with us on Christmas Eve, as you see them now—servants and all; and we wait, until the clock strikes twelve, to usher Christmas in, and beguile the time with forfeits and old stories. Trundle, my boy, rake up the fire—"

\* \* \*

"Now certes, I will do my diligence  
To conne it al, er Cristemasse is went."

The Prioresses Tale.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340-1400).

Pepys's Christmas Day, 1665

"To church in the morning, and there saw a wedding in the church, which I have not seen for many a day; and the young people so merry with one another, and strange to see what a delight we married people have to see these poor fools decoyed into our condition, every man and woman gazing and smiling at them."

King George V, 1935

"THE year that is passing, the twenty-fifth since my Accession, has been to me most memorable. It called forth a spontaneous offering of loyalty—and may I say of love—which the Queen and I can never forget. How could I fail to note in all the rejoicing not merely respect for the Throne, but a warm and generous remembrance of the man himself, who, may God help him, has been placed upon it."

Hugh Walpole Spends Christmas Eve in Petrograd

"I ENTERED the church and found the service was over. I passed through the aisle into the little rounded cup of dark and gold where the altars were. Here there was still collected a company of people, kneeling, some of them, in front of the candles, others standing there motionless like statues, their hands folded gazing before them. The candles hung a mist of dim embroidery upon the walls, and, within the mist, the dark figures of the priests moved to and fro. An old priest with long white hair was standing behind a desk close to me, and reading a long prayer in an unswerving monotonous voice. There was the scent of candles and cold stone and hot human breath



ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, ESQ.,

who graces our Frontispiece, was, in real life, Sir Richard Steele, Bickerstaff being the name he assumed on first producing *The Tatler* in April, 1709. But after the sixth number the success of the paper was assured and the Editor's identity became an open secret

in the little place. The tawdry gilt of the ikons glittered in the candlelight, and an echo of the cold wind creeping up the long dark aisle blew the light so that the gilt was like flashing, piercing eyes.

"I wrapped my Shuba closely about me, and stood there lost in a hazy indefinite dream."

\* \* \*

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,  
Surprised I was with sudden heat which made my heart to glow;  
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,  
A pretty Babe all burning bright did in the air appear.

"The Burning Babe,"

ROBERT SOUTHWELL (1561-95).

The Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter ii, verses 7-14

AND she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them at the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.







#### TOM TITT'S IMPRESSIONS OF SOME OF LONDON'S LEADING PANTOMIME LIGHTS

"Two Ton" Tessie O'Shea; Evelyn Laye as Little Boy Blue in "Little Miss Muffet"; Monsewer Eddie Gray as the Baron, and George Gee as one of the wicked robbers, in "Babes in the Wood"; Doris Hare and Richard Hearne in "Mother Goose"; Claude Hulbert in "Dick Whittington"; and Arthur Askey, littlest but not least, as Buttons in "Cinderella"

Anthony Cookman on —

## Pantomime

THE theatre throughout the country is suffering from a shortage of stages, and serious dramatists, holding that an undue proportion of those available are snaffled by the show business, are beginning to get rather hot under the collar. There is shortly to be a Theatre Conference at which Mr. Priestley and his colleagues will no doubt have a good deal to say on the subject; but whatever they say, whatever reorganization they succeed in bringing about, we can depend upon it that for long afterwards the agelessly foolish face of pantomime will be shining unapologetically from a hundred stages on Christmas Eve.

In central London this year, it is true, pantomime is not quite what it was before the war. Regular patrons were once able to afford eloquent preferences. Some were assured that the last distillation of the basic spirit of pantomime was to be caught only at Drury Lane; others discovered superior charm in the characteristic grandeur of Covent Garden; still more plumped for the rollicking fun of the old Lyceum. We must choose

between *Babes in the Wood* at the Princes Theatre and *Cinderella* at the London Casino.

THERE is something of a decline here; yet we shall find that Mr. George Gee and Mr. Eddie Gray in the *Babes*, and Mr. Arthur Askey as Buttons, are strong enough to uphold the tradition on their shoulders. It is a tradition that has survived the wars and the dark times of two centuries, adapting itself to every real change of popular taste, and it is not now in jeopardy.

In every big town Prince Charming is once again hunting for the glass slipper, or Jack is climbing the beanstalk, or Robinson Crusoe is tracing the footprints of Man Friday, or the "Beauty" is sleeping, or Whittington turning again on Highgate Hill at the behest of the bells.

Yet there have always been many otherwise amiable persons who could not abide pantomime. It passes their comprehension that any should tolerate and even cherish the brazen inconsequence of the thing. It must

be owned that devotees rarely trouble to explain their devotion. They are apt to brush aside objections with a good-natured laugh—which momentarily inclines objectors to Shenstone's sour opinion that good nature is often the defence of fools.

WHAT is even more painful to reasonable beings, they sometimes allow every objection that is urged and yet maddeningly refrain from accepting the obvious conclusion. The jokes?—yes, the jokes in general are atrocious and doubtless they lack refinement. The rhymed couplets are beneath contempt. The fairy stories are shamelessly robbed of their original poetry.

The scenery, in the matter of colour, is shocking. And (they will even agree) not only is there no essential difference between one pantomime and another, though some are mysteriously determined to be better than others, but they all run like so many machines to a timetable scarcely less trustworthy than Bradshaw.



At 2.15 on the afternoon of Boxing Day principal boys all over the country sing of love's young dream. At 2.45 the funny men sing a song of sausages. At 3.30 the funny men compel the audience to sing an even sillier song. At 3.45 the transformation scene extends stages to their uttermost. At 4.45 a knockabout artist pours whitewash or soot or soapy bathwater down the necks of his fellows.

No part of this formidable indictment is seriously contested; yet it is bewilderingly plain that the devotees are unshakably persuaded that if these things did not occur more or less thus year after year alarm and despondency would sweep over the land. They are, of course, perfectly right.

They see no reason why explanation should be required of a theatrical ritual that can hold hardened playgoers as well as children for four hours on end. All they know is that it enables them to make a gentle return to a perennial mood in which laughter—and sometimes enchantment—comes with soothing ease. The ritual would scarcely have this pleasing influence if it were not very much alive.

It is the indomitable vitality of pantomime which gives it what Chesterton described something in Dickens as having—"the defiant finality of a perfect absurdity." There is only one way for devotees to defend their exuberant enjoyment of the absurdity. They must echo Lamb's argument that the worst puns are in effect the best: the more exactly they satisfy the critical, the less hold they have upon other faculties.

Is there not much to be said for a warm-hearted interlude in the theatrical year which fetters our critical faculties and gives the others an airing? For the rest of the year regular playgoers dutifully consider the duel of the sexes, the deplorable relations of parents to children, the crimes of history, the implications of this or that new political tyranny, and so on to the best of their intellectual powers. Pantomime comes as a sudden relief.

Well meaning men still dream of an ideal pantomime which shall charm the senses, stimulate the imagination and satisfy the intelligence. But when they have translated dream into actuality, if ever they do, the thing achieved will not be pantomime. Pantomime as it has pleased generation after generation in this country is a joyous and, I think, salutary transformation of the standards of taste and intelligence by which during the working days of the year we make shift to live. But to defend it nowadays we are handicapped by our own inhibited unsentimental descriptive idiom.



The Cowardly Lion played by that miniature comedian Jackie Hunter in "The Wizard of Oz"

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA was a Victorian and was not afraid to be simple and sentimental in the matter. "What a strange, admirable, absurd, inscrutable thing is our English pantomime," he wrote. "What an intensely national thing it has grown up to be! How we have loved it in our day and cherish it still for the sake of the mirth and delight it imparts to our little ones, and the soothing sadness with which it inspires us as it calls up our days of innocent revel." That is how many of us feel about pantomime; but we should scarcely like anyone to hear us saying so.

# THE CHRISTMAS SHOWS

## Pantomimes

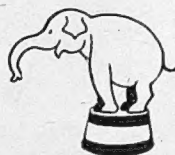


**CASINO—Cinderella** presented by Emile Littler. This is a magnificent anti-austerity production. Cinders is played by Carole Lynne, and Arthur Askey (Big-Hearted as ever) is once again the perfect Buttons both in size and personality.

**DAVIS THEATRE, CROYDON—Little Miss Muffet** ("who saw that spider sit down beside her") has Ethel Rynell, most precocious of precocious children, in the title role, with lovely Evelyn Laye, our most decorative Principal Boy, as Little Boy Blue.

**PRINCES—The Babes in the Wood.** Jill Manners sings entrancingly as Principal Boy, while what could be badder than Monsewer Eddie Gray's bad, bad Baron? The Babes are abducted most successfully by George Gee and Charles Cameron.

## Circuses



**OLYMPIA—Bertram Mills Circus.** Includes Triska's White Devils, "thrills on the high wire," Edoardo, "the most outstanding juggler of all time," the Elephant Ballet, the Mills Equestrian Display, the Coco Family, "wholesale comedy merchants," and all the fun of the fair.

## Musicals

**ADELPHI—Bless the Bride.** C. B. Cochran's delightful period operetta has grace, charm and music which lingers long in the memory. The author and composer are A. P. Herbert and Vivian Ellis, and the leading singers that fine French artiste Georges Guétary and Lizbeth Webb.

**AMBASSADORS—Sweetest and Lowest.** Hermione Gingold and Henry Kendall, deliciously malicious as ever, lend their own particular brand of sophistication to the Christmas spirit.

**COLISEUM—Annie, Get Your Gun.** This tough and melodious musical comes from America as do its two leading stars who shine so brightly. They are Dolores Gray, who finds that "You Can't Get a Man with a Gun," and dashing Bill Johnson.

**DRURY LANE—Oklahoma!** This outstanding U.S. success is tuneful, decorative and moves with transatlantic speed and smoothness.

**DUKE OF YORK'S—One, Two, Three!** Binnie and Sonnie Hale, whose resourceful talents lead this show, cut a million capers in their various disguises and with equal success give us a few moments of themselves.

**GLOBE—Tuppence Coloured.** Wit, sparkle and song is supplied adroitly by Joyce Grenfell, whose satire is never unkind but scores the bull's eye every time. Elisabeth Welch's singing is always pleasing to the ear, and Max Adrian is equally at home as a member of the canine breed or the most eccentric of signalmen.

**HIPPODROME—Starlight Roof.** Vic Oliver, Pat Kirkwood, Fred Emney, that immense barrel of humour, a big cast and Melachrino's music make this a vintage evening.

**PALLADIUM—Here, There and Everywhere.** The arch mirth-maker Tommy Trinder and his company give some of the best holiday relaxation.

**PRINCE OF WALES—Piccadilly Hayride.** That master of mime and mimicry, that incomparable impersonator of the "spiv," Sid Field, takes you on a grand and glorious hayride.

**VICTORIA PALACE—Together Again.** Spend several crazy hours with the Crazy Gang in the presence of Bud Flanagan, Nervo and Knox and Naughton and Gold and you will certainly shake the dust of depression off your feet.

## Old Favourites

**PALACE—Charley's Aunt.** This old favourite of University life in the bad old days, when play was more important than work, is more outrageously funny than ever, as are its complications and its protagonists.

**ST. JAMES'S—Treasure Island.** Robert Louis Stevenson's incomparable adventure story is here again complete with pirates and hidden treasure, while Long John Silver's malignant personality dominates the scene.

**SAVILLE—Sim Sala Bim.** Dante, the Master of Magic, returns with a host of new tricks up his sleeve.

**HAYMARKET—Present Laughter.** Noel Coward's sparkling piece about the turbulent private life of a famous actor is forever safe in the hands of Hugh Sinclair as Garry Essendine.

**PICCADILLY—Off the Record.** This successful naval comedy of errors is grand entertainment. As are the performances of "Admiral" Hugh Wakefield, Jack Allen as the most pseudo of Lieutenant-Commanders, Bill Gates an equally at sea M.P., and Tom Gill a magnificently dumb Flag Lieutenant.

**VAUDEVILLE—The Chiltern Hundreds** by Douglas Home. A. E. Matthews's delightfully inconsequent peer, Michael Shepley's magnificent butler and Marjorie Fielding's unruffled peeress all gracefully burlesque the political scene and the art of noblesse oblige.

**SCALA—Peter Pan.** This year Peter is played by film star Phyllis Calvert, whilst her husband, Peter Murray Hill, takes the dual roles of the amiable Mr. Darling and the ferocious Captain Hook—with crocodile to taste.

**STRAND—The Wizard of Oz.** This charming American fairy tale, which has much tuneful music and many endearing characters, such as the eccentric Wizard himself, the Tin Man and the Cowardly Lion returns in a new and vastly improved form for a Christmas season in the West End.

**WESTMINSTER—Maskelyne's Christmas Magic.** Another wizard weaves his spells with incomparable mystery and magic.

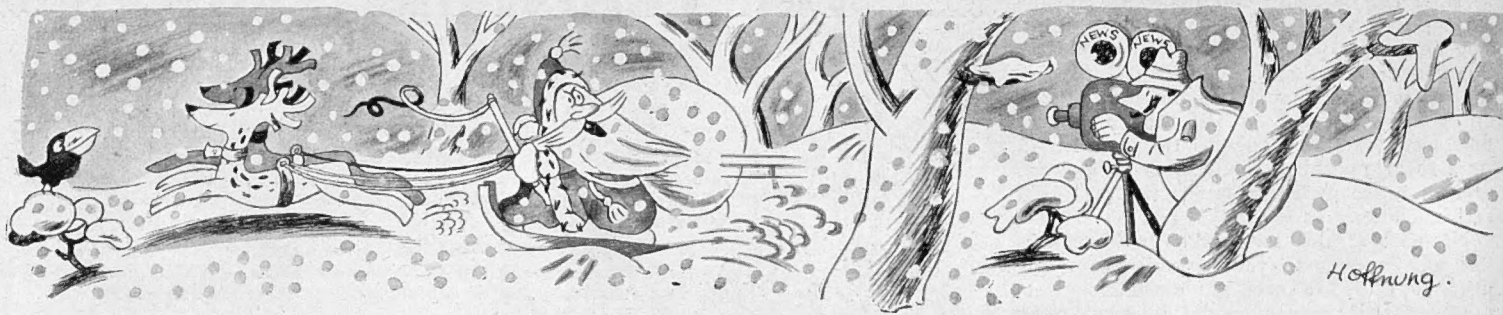
## Comedies

**WHITEHALL—Worm's Eye View.** R. F. Delderfield's very funny R.A.F. comedy concerns trouble with a landlady, with a landlady's daughter, and a host of complications which go to make a side-splitting evening. Ronald Shiner and Jack Hobbs have the leading parts.

**WINTER GARDEN—Outrageous Fortune** by Ben Travers. That absurd pair, Ralph Lynn and Robertson Hare more hilariously absurd in character and conduct than ever, ramble in and out of the black market to the tune of Mr. Hare's "Oh, torment! Oh, pandemonium! Oh, topsy turvy!"







Freda Bruce Lockhart

[Decorations by Hoffnung]

# At The Pictures

## Christmas Spirits

CHRISTMAS—or, to be precise, the week before Christmas—has been celebrated in the West End cinemas with a selection of films inspired presumably by a hazy perception that Christmas is not primarily a worldly festival. Hollywood's specialities of the season are not represented: the one really appropriate Christmas film, *The Big Heart*, was shown well before December—quite properly, since it was a Christmas shopping film; from Cary Grant's angelic visitations to *The Bishop's Wife* all but the Command Performance audience have been mercifully preserved by the tax. So our exhibitors seem to have ransacked British film shelves to find us something unworldly, or at least other-worldly for Christmas.

Old or new, matters of life and death, spiritualism, reincarnation, transmigration of souls—the remoteness of these various fantasies from the Christmas spirit has been no handicap to selection, provided they contain some suggestion of the supernatural.

WITHIN these unorthodox terms of reference, it is quite natural that choice should have dictated two revivals of distinction. Most people will already have seen *A Matter of Life and Death* and *Blithe Spirit*. My own experience is that both improve greatly on second viewing, partly because we are now shockproof, partly because we have seen fewer films this year of the quality of either.

At first sight of *A Matter of Life and Death*, I remember finding the Powell-Pressburger idea of a mechanized, bureaucratic Heaven, so objectionable that I could only reluctantly acknowledge the skill of the production. Seeing it again, however, ready now for the worst, I am able to appreciate that on its own terms it is an almost completely successful film. At any rate it is a film; and tells its fantastic story in the language of the cinema and with the cinema's legitimate devices.

This aeronautical Heaven, riddled with red tape and ruled by a high court irresistibly reminiscent of the Hollywood Bowl, is still more like my idea of Hell. But it is a relief that the squadron leader (David Niven) who ought to be dead takes the story of his visitations from the interplanetary "Conductor 71" (Marius Goring) not to a psychiatrist but to a neurologist who is also a homely G.P., as wholesomely earthy as Roger Livesey can make him. Much of the argument, for belief and doubt, is valid enough, at least as argument, to stimulate.

I seem to remember complaints that the picture was anti-British because of the onslaught on wicked Britain made by the American Counsel for the Prosecution (Raymond Massey) in the celestial trial of the pilot who has put the whole celestial card index wrong by failing to die at his appointed time. But one of the comedy peaks is the moment

when the good doctor, as Counsel for the Defence, caps the Prosecution's scornful representation of the "voice of Britain" as a fatuous English voice commenting on cricket, with a hideous cacaphony of hotcha chorus instantly recognizable as the "voice of America."

Development of this extremely ambitious and spectacular fable is surprisingly enough more consistent and logical than that of many films which Mr. Powell and Mr. Pressburger have tried to plant more firmly on the ground. Colour has been graded and trick photography practised with inventive exuberance but complete justification, both in the creation of the Upper World and the stoppage of time and action in the Lower when the elegant "Conductor 71" comes down to interview the squadron leader whom he has somehow allowed to miss his destination. The parallel between the celestial trial of the pilot's appeal to be allowed to live and love and the operation on his brain is consistently followed. But there is certainly no room for Christmas in this monochrome celluloid Heaven: as "Conductor 71" says, standing in a bower of deep red rhododendrons: "one is starved for—Technicolor up there."

By the very realism they can impart to Wellsian worlds, films tend to paralyse fantasy. Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* floats along gaily on the more comfortable level of sophisticated comedy ghost story. This famous play is much too well-known to need recapitulation and the film is of course in the photographed play class. But for so flimsy a piece it wears extremely well.

Technicolor film is exactly the right medium for this mock, spiritualist world, incompetently materialized by the monstrous Madame Arcati (Margaret Rutherford) with her ecstatic school-girl slang. The greenish hue and wraith-like texture in which Elvira (Kay Hammond) first appears, to haunt her earthly husband (Rex Harrison) and his second wife (Constance Cummings), makes her the perfect ghost. Only the film can show us Miss Cummings walking slap-through Miss Hammond as she sits, a mocking spectre, on the stairs. The usually fatal difficulty of making an apparition visible and audible to one character only is most discreetly solved. And at the end, when all three are wraiths, we feel we are leaving them sitting on the bridge to embark on a lively Purgatory, a lighter version of Sartre's hideous Existentialist hell in "Huit-Clos."

BOTH these revived fantasies are classics of the cinema compared with *While I Live*, at the Leicester Square, which dabbles half-heartedly in theories of reincarnation. Into the eccentric Cornish household, which Julia Trevelyan (Sonia Dresdel) keeps as a living monument to her dead sister, rushes one night an amnesia case (Carol Raye) who goes straight to the piano and plays the sister's composition. Under Julia's domination, all but one of the inmates accept the theory that the stranger is a reincarnation of the dead composer.

The film, of course, has a practical explanation of this quite promising phenomenon and can also provide a melodramatic cliff-edge climax. The trouble, however, is not so much the story as that the film seems to have been slapped on to the screen without any attempt, except by the unfortunate actors, to create a hint of atmosphere. The result is that, in spite of the title, nothing in the film lives for a moment. Tom Walls alone, as an ancient retainer who prides himself on his Cornish second sight, suggests a sketch that might have come to life in a less paralytic picture.



THE half-dozen new Disney shorts are much funnier than any recent Disneys I have seen. But can fantasy be mass-produced? Except for one plainly hilarious "Goofy" called *How to Ride a Horse*, the fun in these is a savage satire—of Hollywood psychiatry, flashback, crooners (Donald crooning like Crosby) and the eastern desert. Salutary satire; but fantasy has vanished (though Figaro the kitten keeps his conscience in one ear to emerge with halo) and with it taste and imagination. The drawing is in the vulgarized style of the factory hands of Disney INC; the animals are unlovable; and even beloved Minnie Mouse seems to have acquired a middle-aged spread and a coarsened voice. Alas, poor Walt!

IN the only completely mundane film of the week, *Monsieur Alibi*, at the Academy, Louis Jouvet plays a crook and his innocent double. Jouvet's acting is always a pleasure and here we have more than a double dose of him in all his disguises. But this is a very *moche* little French production, as drably careless as a "B" picture in any language. In the same programme is *La Maternelle*, a film of which I have charming memories that I hope to refresh and to recall here after Christmas.





Angus McBean

One of the most entertaining items in the revue *Tuppence Coloured*, at the Globe, is "Between the Lines," where Max Adrian as a signalman uses his levers to more convivial purpose than changing lights from red to green. The design for scenery by Emmett, whose prehistoric railways are so renowned, has been translated into paint with astonishing fidelity. Max Adrian, seen acting as mine host to John Heavood, has been in his time a chorus member, ballet dancer and, in the *Gielgud* season at the Haymarket in 1944, a Shakespearean actor. He has also acted in films

## RAILROAD FROLIC



## Sydney Box's "Film Jubilee"



Susan Shaw hands Sydney Box a piece of cake at the party held to celebrate his twenty-fifth film



The performance at the Cambridge Theatre was attended by H.R.H. the Duchess of Gloucester. The programme sellers seen above are Mrs. Ault, Mrs. Byrne, Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Court and Miss Cook

## Special Performance of "Don Giovanni"

For the Margaret McMillan Memorial Fund



Among the guests: Anne Crawford, Susan Shaw, Jack Warner, Muriel Box, Mila Parely, Patricia Roc, Guy Rolf and Jean Kent



The Lord Mayor (Sir Frederick Wells), the Hon. Mrs. Denys Lawson and Mr. Jay Pomeroy. Behind, Mr. Denys Lawson



Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Greenwood were also among the large audience who came to hear the performance



The cake being distributed. The party was given at the Gainsborough Studios, Shepherd's Bush, of which Sydney Box is now head. His "silver jubilee" film is a study of the poet Byron



Mrs. J. S. Greenhalgh, secretary for the performance, buys a programme from Miss Felicity Atlee



Florence Countess Jellicoe arriving at the theatre with her son, the second Earl Jellicoe



## A Coming-of-Age Celebration



Mr. Charles McArthur Hardy, of 36, Thurloe Square, waiting with his mother to receive guests at his twenty-first birthday party



On the balcony: Capt. and Mrs. J. Standish, Mr. Patrick Leigh, Miss Patricia Brooks, Miss Gillian Wharton, Lt. Frank Brown, R.N., and Miss Kyra Prehn



A group on the stairs: Mr. Kenneth Staib, Miss Pamela Robertson, Miss Barbara Evans, Mr. John Robertson and Miss Prudence Evans



Sir Jocelyn Lucas (centre), chairman of the Hospitality Committee, with New Zealand guests: S/Ldr. Manson, Dr. D. L. Richwhite, F/Lt. R. Free, Mrs. Richwhite, Miss Jean Potts, S/Ldr. L. B. Furkert and W/Cdr. A. N. Breckon

## The Over-Seas League Hold a Reception To Greet Empire Visitors to London



Capt. Allan, from Australia, talking to Lord Bruce, a former Prime Minister of that Dominion, and Lady Bruce



Mr. Norman Martin, Agent-General for New Victoria, Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Ewart, also from Australia



The Agent-General for Saskatchewan, Canada, with the Hon. George Lambert, M.P., and his wife



Cdr. and Mrs. Noble with H.E. the Nepalese Ambassador and the Rani Kaiser, at Over-Seas House, St. James's





Bassano

*The Hon. Mrs. Peter James Mowbray Rous with her three children, the youngest of whom was born in February this year. Her husband is the fourth son of the third Earl of Stradbroke, and she is the younger daughter of Major the Hon. Alastair Fraser*

*Jennifer writes*

## HER SOCIAL JOURNAL

**T**O-MORROW is Christmas Day. Thus I start my journal this week by wishing my readers at home and all over the world a very happy Christmas, and may 1948 bring you all peace, happiness, and prosperity.

As in former years, H.M. the King will once more broadcast a Christmas Day message to the nation and Empire from his study at Sandringham after the family Christmas lunch.

Her Majesty the Queen, with her customary quiet, unruffled efficiency, managed to fit in several engagements before she left for Sandringham, as well as finding time to attend to her personal Christmas shopping. An hour spent in a very full and detailed inspection of the magnificent collection of Van Gogh paintings and drawings at the Tate Gallery, and another hour spent at Australia House admiring the war pictures of a young and promising Australian artist, Miss Norma Bull, gave evidence of Her Majesty's continued and abiding interest in art. The Van Gogh visit, too, afforded an opportunity for Princess Margaret, who accompanied her mother, to show that she inherits much of the Queen's love of art, and has already acquired a considerable knowledge of it herself, so that she was able to surprise Mr. John Rothenstein, the Director of the Tate, and Mr. Philip James, Director of the Arts Council, who acted as guides to the Royal visitors, with her acquaintance with the little-known earlier work of the Dutch artist, done before he went to Paris.

**T**HE Princess, incidentally, had been out with a small party of friends the night before, first to see the Ralph Lynn farce *Outrageous Fortune* at the Winter Garden, then on to dance at Ciro's with a party of young friends.

Her yearly visit to dine with her fellow-Benchers of the Middle Temple occupied another of the Queen's evenings before she left town for the Christmas holiday.

The Royal party are being joined at Sandringham by the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester

and their children, who, altering their intention to spend Christmas at home, have planned to motor from Barnwell Manor to Norfolk to-day.

**A**MONG the King's pre-Christmas engagements was a visit to No. 10, Downing Street, to dine with the Prime Minister. On this occasion His Majesty was, as usual when he dines with the Premier, attended by Sir Alan Lascelles, who, as the King's Private Secretary, is the main channel of communication between the Sovereign and members of his Governments both here and in the Dominions, which causes Sir Alan to be referred to sometimes, to his own amusement, as the "King's own Prime Minister." Earlier that day, the King had held the last Investiture of the year in the Grand Hall of the Palace. Among many recipients of the D.S.O. who attended were Col. Sir John Carew-Pole, W/Cdr. the Hon. William Davidson, second son of Baron Broughshane, and Major the Earl Cathcart, of the Scots Guards, who more often greets the King on horseback as adjutant when His Majesty visits Sandhurst.

**T**HERE were many members of the Corps Diplomatique at the wedding of Capt. Ian McGarvie-Munn and Señorita Carmen Ydigoras-Laparra, only daughter of the Guatemalan Minister and Señora Ydigoras-Fuentes, which took place at St. James's Church, Spanish Place. The bride wore a lovely wedding-dress of gorgeous ivory satin. Her head-dress was a halo of exquisite old lace made on a frame, most unusual and very attractive, and she carried a bouquet of white orchids, which are the national flower of Guatemala. Her three bridesmaids wore most becoming long ruby-red velvet dresses with a neckline similar to the bridesmaids' dresses chosen by H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth, and wreaths of red roses in their hair. The reception, which was held at Canning House, was a gay and cheerful affair, with a band playing the whole time. The bride and

bridegroom stood at the top of the stairs in front of a bower of white flowers, while guests wished them happiness and filed past into the large reception room, where I met the bride's parents and her brother, who was married earlier this year, with his wife, who was wearing a fur coat over her dress, and the bridegroom's parents.

The High Commissioner for Pakistan was accompanied by his wife, who told me that so far the English winter weather has not troubled them, and that with their children they have settled in happily here and already made many friends. The Nepalese Ambassador was accompanied by his very beautiful young wife, who was wearing a short mink jacket over one of her exquisite saris. The Rani, who has never had to wear a coat in Nepal, has found it difficult to get used to wrapping up when she goes out here. The Nepalese Ambassador and his wife were chatting to Mrs. Eveleigh Nash; the Venezuelan Ambassador was accompanied by his lovely wife, who, like all the South American guests, was superbly dressed; she was wearing black. Mrs. Washington Singer was sitting quietly in a corner, where many friends went to have a word with her.

Among other guests who had come to wish the young couple every happiness I met Sir Jocelyn Lucas; Monsieur Paul Ruegger, the charming Swiss Minister, always one of the busiest men in the Corps Diplomatique, who popped in late and told me he was off to Switzerland for a few days, and at the end of that week was flying to India with Mme. Ruegger for the opening of the Swiss Legation there; and Mrs. Arnold, who has done wonders to make Canning House such a delightful headquarters for South American colonies in London.

**M**AJOR NORMAN FRASER, who is Liaison Officer with the U.S. Military Forces in London, gave another of his delightful Anglo-American cocktail-parties recently at the Dorchester, when he was assisted in entertaining



his guests by his charming mother, Mrs. Bernard Fraser, who had come up from the country especially for the occasion, and by his sister Marjorie. As is not always the case at cocktail-parties, guests were introduced to new arrivals continuously, and one felt that many friendships were started that evening between the peoples of our two countries.

Among the American guests at the party were Major-Gen. and Mrs. Clayton Bissell, who were chatting with their hostess; Lt.-Col. Berry, who is the medical officer attached to the U.S. Military Staff, and Mrs. Berry; Col. J. Ackerman and his attractive wife, who was sitting on a sofa talking to Mrs. Sweeny; Col. Du Frenne and his wife, who was wearing a lovely mink coat; Mr. and Mrs. Eldon Bailey, and Capt. and Mrs. John Pearson with their pretty little daughter Beverly, who wore pearls in her hair, which was dressed high in an unusual and attractive manner. Lt.-Col. and Mrs. Bartlett were accompanied by their young daughter, who is off to a finishing school in Paris after Christmas.

Miss Sharman Douglas was the centre of a group of young friends and very thrilled at the prospect of returning to America for Christmas, which will enable her brothers to be united with their parents and sister again. Mrs. Shelley was at the party and answering enquiries about her husband, Cdre. Shelley, who was ill and not able to come. I met Major Linstrand, who told me he was shortly returning to the States for refresher courses; he is interested in the electrical side of soldiering and hopes to be back in London in about a year. Mr. Taylor, of the U.S.N., was at the party with his very pretty English wife, who will be making her first visit to America when they go to Washington next year, when her husband rejoins his ship.

and was looking strikingly pretty, Miss J. Malcolm, who is in the W.R.N.S., Mrs. Prentice, in Red Cross uniform (she is one of the tireless workers at their headquarters in Grosvenor Place), Mr. A. Colegate, who was Member for Wrekin, with Mrs. Colegate and their daughter Joy, and Mr. Anthony White, who is in the R.N. and told me he is going to the United States shortly.

**T**HE Anglo-Brazilian Ball was a brilliant affair. The women were lovely, and it was quite the best-dressed ball I have been to for years. Men wore decorations, which added colour to their evening dress. The dresses of some of the South American guests were exquisite; made of the most gorgeous silks, satins and brocades, all in the newest designs. It really was a refreshing sight for many of us, who have now got used to wearing the plainest (mostly black) dresses which have to last us years, to see all these lovely creations around us.

The president of the Society, H.E. the Brazilian Ambassador, and Mme. Moniz d'Aracao had a large party at their table, including the Archdukes Robert and Felix of Austria, Mrs. Alistair Cameron, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick de Laszlo, Mr. Scott Fox, who works at the Foreign Office, Mrs. Haigh, whose husband is attached to our Embassy in Lisbon, and two charming Greeks, Mr. and Mrs. Lykiardopoulou.

Near by I saw the popular Chilean Ambassador and Mme. Bianchi, one of the most beautiful women in this room of lovely women, looking enchanting in a magnificent full-skirted dress and a little real black lace snood trimmed with tiny black velvet bows on her hair, very unusual and attractive. They had a party of eight, including the recently married Sir John and Lady Carden.

There was another newly-married couple at the ball, Capt. and Mrs. Ian McGarvie-Munn, who had been married that afternoon and came in to join her parents, the Guatemalan Minister and Señora Ydigoras-Fuentes, at their table. The bride, who had left

the reception in her wedding-dress, had changed into a lovely pale pink satin dress for the ball. I noticed one of her bridesmaids dancing and still wearing her red velvet bridesmaid's dress and the wreath of red roses in her hair.

**M**R. PHILIP BRIANT was dancing with his hostess, Lady Cook, who, with Sir Thomas Cook, chairman of the Anglo-Brazilian Society, had a party of sixteen, including Col. Sir Arthur Evans, the vice-chairman, their daughter, Miss Geraldine Cook, looking sweet in a fluffy dress, Miss Gina Fox, whose grandmother, Lady Huntingfield, gave a

dance for her recently at Croxton Park, Miss Una Shenley, the Hon. Robin Borwick, the Hon. Edmund Ironside and Mme. Cuevas. Viscount Davidson, wearing an Order round his neck, was dancing with Viscountess Davidson, the Member for Hemel Hempstead, who looked charming in a pale-blue and silver brocade dress, which suited her lovely auburn hair. Viscount Davidson, who has just returned from a visit to South America, is president of the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Councils. Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Cyril Newall, who has the most impressive amount of medal ribbons, was at a table with Lady Newall, chic in apricot satin, and Major and Mrs. Edward Christie Miller, the latter looking most attractive in a full-skirted black dress.

Others who brought parties included the Dominican Minister and Mme. Pastoriza, the Mexican Ambassador and Mme. Jimenez O'Farrill, H.E. the Peruvian Ambassador and Mme. Berckemeyer, the Venezuelan Ambassador and Mme. Azpura, and the Uruguayan Ambassador and Mme. MacEachen. Instead of a cabaret during the evening there was a mannequin parade of models from the British Guild of Creative Designers, who showed some excellent creations by such famous designers as Angèle Delanghe, Charles Creed, Bianca Mosca and Digby Morton.

**T**o me one of the happiest things about Christmas each year is hearing from all my friends and readers all over the world. The first Christmas card I received this year came from Mr. Dorsey Fisher, who was for many years a very popular member of the American Embassy staff in London. Last year he was appointed to the U.S. Embassy in Mexico, where he tells me he is living in an attractive 300-year-old house, with what sounds to me an enchanting garden producing masses of calla lilies, roses and geraniums that climb 15 ft. up the walls, although pride of place is taken in the garden by a glorious 12-ft. poinsettia tree. Dorsey tells me he is hoping many English friends will visit him next year. During the past year Alatheia Lady Manton was one of his guests, and before that Mr. Tony Pawson managed to fit in a visit during his travels. Mr. George Woodward, who was at the U.S. Navy Headquarters in Grosvenor Square during the war, was his guest last month, while attending the U.N.E.S.C.O. conference, and all have enjoyed renewing old friendships with Mr. Angus Malcolm, who was in Washington and is now British Chargé d'Affaires in Mexico, with, I hear, a very attractive South African bride.



Mabel Countess of Airlie, widow of the fifth Earl of Airlie, and Lady Anderson, wife of Sir John Anderson, were also at the bazaar



Tommy Trinder, the well-known comedian, who opened the Christmas Cracker bazaar, with Lady Woolton

**C**APT. FRED HALL, who comes from Boston, was chatting to Lady Elizabeth Motion and her daughter, Diana Hesketh-Prichard, who recently had a very nasty accident when she was kicked on the head after a fall out hunting, when she was riding a young horse for the first time with hounds. Lord and Lady Cathcart had come up for the party from the R.M.A. at Sandhurst, both in very good form, and others I saw included Sir Francis Head, from the Foreign Office, chatting to Mrs. Warren Pearl and her pretty auburn-haired daughter Susan, Lady Eden and her daughter Ann, Sir Gifford and Lady Fox and their debutante daughter Gina, in a blue and white printed dress, the Dowager Lady Swaythling, Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd, Lt.-Col. Allinson of the Lovat Scouts, Señorita Susana MacEachen, who had come along from the Uruguayan Embassy



The Christmas Cracker Bazaar in Aid of the National Association of Girls' Clubs and Mixed Clubs

The Marchioness of Linlithgow, Lady Doreen Hope, her second daughter, and Mrs. Boyle



The Duchess of Kent was among the visitors to the bazaar and is seen admiring one of the stalls



Mrs. Hore-Belisha, Mrs. R. Churchill and her mother, Mrs. Granville Bullimore



*George Bilainkin:*

## AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES'S



H.E. Mr. J. W. Dulanty, High Commissioner for Eire

"No confectionery about that!" In these words the soft-toned voice, slow, with mild accent, expresses contempt for the shoddy façades of the ice-cream era, and affection for the realities when these succeed in the struggle for expression. His Excellency Mr. John Whelan Dulanty, C.B., LL.D., since 1930 High Commissioner for Ireland, glanced at the fine bust of the "Liberator" by Andrew O'Connor. The pensive eyes moved away to the other stalwart souls portrayed in the austere, yet comfortable, office high above Piccadilly Circus. There is an oddly serene De Valera by John Lavery, and a framed portrait of his favourite, Cardinal Newman, suggesting problems resolved and hopes achieved.

Books on international affairs, Catholicism, poultry, philosophy, lie everywhere, crowd the neat bookshelves. A tell-tale box of eggs lies upon the settee.

PRIME MINISTERS and leaders here and in Ireland come and disappear, but Dulanty, diplomatist and maker of commercial deals, remains. To-day it is not so difficult to carry out the duties of High Commissioner of the 3,000,000 citizens of Eire, who precisely ten years ago announced, after a plebiscite, that they belong to a "sovereign independent democratic State," for the bitterness between the British and the people he represents has largely disappeared.

How wise was the Prime Minister of Eire when he decided not to change the High Commissioner appointed by his predecessor! For who could more cogently interpret the Irish of the South to the British than John Dulanty? Was he not born near Manchester, son of a Tipperary patriot and a Limerick mother? Did he not suffer a wound in his forehead for religious faith before he received a certificate as a qualified "full-timer" in the local mill at 13?

Years of suffering killed many of the southern Irish in Lancashire, but the economic struggle merely moulded to greater resolution the spirit of John Dulanty. He studied at local evening classes, law at Manchester University and in the Middle Temple. Examiner for the Board of Education, then adviser to Indian students in the Northern British universities, Dulanty demonstrated his faith as honorary, oratorical, adviser, under John Redmond, of the United Irish League of Great Britain.

DURING the First World War he served Lloyd George, Edwin Montagu, Lord Addison and Mr. Churchill as a Principal Assistant Secretary in the Ministry of Munitions, and heard "L.G." saying, when Sir Eric Geddes demanded Dulanty's resignation, "Don't shoot at the pianist: he's doing his best." Dislike of confectionery led to another scene as a result of which Dulanty received the C.B., and his opponent retired.

Dulanty left the Assistant Secretaryship at the Treasury to become managing director of a celebrated London store. He then refused the Trade Commissionership in London, but later accepted, saying, "I'd rather be High Commissioner in London for the Free State [title till 1937] than Prime Minister of Britain." There is an intangible quality in his fascinating voice. But I think if Dulanty were scratched near the sore point of Partition, he would prove a Tartar. For his task here is unfinished.



At a supper table at the Dorchester during the Ball, which is held annually: Mr. Spencer Tory, Mrs. Maxwell, Col. Lender, Mrs. Whittle, Mr. Charles Berger and Miss Trevor Jones

## The Anglo-Brazilian Society Ball



Sir Thomas Cook, chairman of the Anglo-Brazilian Society, and Lady Cook



The Brazilian Ambassador, H.E. Senhor J. J. Moniz de Aragao, and his wife



Marshal of the R.A.F. Lord Newall, formerly Governor-General of New Zealand, and Lady Newall



Air Cdre. R. C. Michaelson and Mrs. K. Davies were two more of the guests



Mr. Bulow and the Hon. Mrs. Reginald Fellowes enjoy a cigarette after supper



Capt. A. Whicker and Lady Martin were also among the large company present



## Families at a Recent Investiture at Buckingham Palace



*Capt. James Tuohy, of Sammenden, Sussex, who received the D.S.O., with his wife and mother*



*S/Ldr. Raymond Esher, D.F.C. and Bar, who was another winner of the D.S.O., with his wife and daughter*



*Major John Goldsmith, the racehorse trainer, received his D.S.O. for work with the Maquis. With him is Mrs. Goldsmith and their daughter Gale*



*F/Lt. S. Woodward holds his eight-week-old daughter Gillian while his wife admires his D.S.O.*



*Col. Stanley Preston, of Streatham, with his wife and daughter. He was awarded the O.B.E.*



*Lt.-Col. N. K. Estcourt, who received the D.S.O. and the O.B.E., shows them to his wife and son James*



*Lt.-Col. Harry Wright, of Banchory, Kincardine, Scotland, with his wife and daughter after being awarded the D.S.O.*



*Lt.-Col. James Blackwater, of Cambridge, who received the D.S.O., with his wife and daughter Jill outside the Palace after the Investiture*





Cyril

## Self-Profile

# The Brothers Mills

(of Circus Fame)

by

and

**A**LTHOUGH there are several years between us we might well have been twins. We think alike and act alike, though, as can happen with twins, we do not always agree. But at least we think in the same direction.

It has been said by those who know us only too well that there exists between us a very marked evidence of telepathy, and one story goes that, while one of us was in America and the other in Sweden, we thought of the same idea practically simultaneously.

We don't look alike. The younger looks older than the elder. The elder actually was an oil engineer, the other an expert in estate management and planning. When Cyril was busy organising an oil refinery plant—the biggest of its kind at that time in the country—and Bernard was endeavouring to do, on a small scale, what Town and Country Planning is now attempting, our father, Bertram Mills, had, out of sheer desire and ambition, become a circus promoter.

## A Bet with Lord Lonsdale

**B**ERTRAM had already built a reputation, founded largely upon his abilities as a coaching expert, a driver of hackneys and a judge at shows, for circus planning. He went into that line of business after seeing what was described as a high-class circus. He was accompanied by Lord Lonsdale, and when the final turn had disappeared, Bertram said: "I could have put on a better show than that myself."

Lonsdale, always a sportsman, replied: "I will bet you £100 you don't."

Bertram took on the bet, and within a year he had gathered together some of the finest performers in the world.

At the end of term at Harrow and when we came down from Cambridge, we always went straight to father's side to help him in any way we could with his circus affairs.

When Bertram died in 1938 we boys had to choose between carrying on in our respective professions or continuing the circus in father's name. We gave up our professions.

From helping father to judge at the shows, Bernard straightway took over the administration department of the circus. Cyril elected the perhaps more fascinating side—talent-spotting—flying in pursuit of acts all over Europe, and producing. Cyril is a good judge of an act, perhaps a better arbiter of how to put the circus programme together, and certainly how to direct in regard to timing and placing of that programme.

More humdrum is the task of Bernard. He plans the administration as he would have

planned estates and communities. It is just a matter of the two of us having flairs for slightly different objectives in a common cause.

## Adventure in a Moth

**C**YRIL is an adept aviator. He flies his Moth as far as it will take him. Once it took him into Lapland; another time, hell-bent for Vienna, he crashed thirty miles short of his destination in the middle of a cornfield on a wet day. When he regained consciousness, he was facing the skies and his plane was upside-down. All he got was a gash in the face and a lot of mud. When he tells of that experience it is not so much in terms of being scared, but the circumstance of finding, within five minutes of regaining consciousness, about thirty people standing around him. He said they must have come out of the ground. A kindly farmer took him into Vienna in a rickety car, and Cyril was so bespattered with mud and blood that at first he was refused admission to the Bristol Hotel, where he had booked his rooms. Only when he had washed was he accepted as a guest.

Last year he flew to Stockholm in pursuit of an act he had heard of. When he got there, in a series of six hops, he was told that the act he was looking for had gone to a lumber camp in Lapland. The last 25 miles of the journey to the camp was in a taxi that had three wheels and a lopper. He got the act.

## When the Big Top Balloons

**W**HEN the Bertram Mills Circus is on tour with the Big Top, one or other of us is always with the show. If a sudden gale comes along that lifts the Big Top (weighing about 6 tons), we fall to with the rest of the staff to put things right. Even 125 men, wrestling with a Big Top which has slipped its moorings, do not find it child's play. If their location is in a soggy spot, which is not unusual, it may mean that four tractors are needed to haul one caravan. When that happens we help to keep the tractors and the vans moving, and sometimes that takes

twenty-four hours in the day.

If Cyril were in the motor-racing business he would be called a speed merchant.

Bernard merely likes driving. All our time is taken up with circus work, because there is always something to do, either clearing up what has been, or what is going on—and there is always something going on.

We both have our own private caravan, especially designed with electric-light and gas laid on, radio built into the furniture, and cosy bedroom and practical bathroom. Nearby there is always the de-luxe "chuck wagon" in which we and our immediate colleagues take our meals.

Attached to the wagon is a miniature kitchen and a cook.

We can assure you that one of the joys of this sort of life is our association with what might be called camp followers. We have a number of friends who, from time to time, join us on our tenting tour and who live a circus life. Whoever joins the circus, even as a guest, must take part in the activities and labours of the show. The circus carries no passengers, and every member of the staff is prepared to work at any hour of the day and any number of hours per day. Bernard will tell you that it is not



Bernard



easy to get staff who will make it a possible 24-hour-a-day job. Many are tried and found wanting. Those who stick it are calculated to have circus under the skin.

## Language Class

**T**HE circus is international, timeless and never pretty—that's one of the first truths of the game.

If you want to know anything about languages, join us in the circus. You will soon know what the proper meaning of polyglot is, because the words in use can be a mixture of Czech, Russian, German, French, Italian and Spanish, with the addition of a few slang words from U.S.A. and a bit of cockney, leavened with a touch of circus and fair-ground slang. That is the nearest approach we know to world understanding. We verily believe that if the peace of the world can be achieved, it could be done best of all by denizens of the circus, since, while they are international to the n<sup>th</sup> degree, they have no political inhibitions or disturbing national interests.





"Potato Eaters," a penetrating study of Flanders peasants by Van Gogh, now on view at the Tate.

## Priscilla in Paris

### The Slim Stocking

Voilà!

● Well, I never thought that I should live to say: "Thank Heavens that there's one thing that won't strike in this country: our matches!"

WHAT those who hang up their stockings in France to-night will find in them in the morning remains to be seen, or not seen, as the case may be. This will be an austerity Christmas for most of us, alas, but we can be merry all the same, with a little philosophy. The children of Paris have had one great thrill. For the first time since 1939 the big shops have sent out Christmas catalogues. They are not so thick nor so profusely illustrated as of yore, but such as they are, they take us back to happier pre-war years, and while the grown-ups gloat over French-leather pocket-books, vanity bags, smokers' paraphernalia, wrist-watches and winter sports outfits, the children are wide-eyed as they gaze upon the lovely dolls, the miniature Punch and Judy (I mean, of course, *Guignol*) shows, the chromium-plated scooters, the enticing parlour games and the marvellous constructional sets that will be such a joy . . . for Daddy.

There is only one real snag. The figures that appear under each little drawing. When Mummy has paid for Daddy's pocket-book and Daddy has paid for Mummy's vanity bag, there will be nothing left to put into those *articles de grand luxe* (I quote from the catalogue). But who really desires these frivolities? Cigarette-holders or cases when already-expensive tobacco is getting steadily nastier as it grows steadily dearer. New wrist-watches? One must be rich beyond the most fevered imaginings of pipe dreams even to think of such expenditure.

As for the latest winter sports outfit, since Marcel Richas has started to design ski-ing garments that must be worn with a corset to ensure an 18-in. waist, surely everyone must prefer their older but more comfortable attire . . . besides, even if one belongs to the Two Hundred Families who, alone, are supposed to afford these luxuries, how do we know that there will be trains to take us to "wallow naked (or clothed) in December snow"? And that disposes of that, although it is very pleasant to think that all these amenities still exist and may some day be ours again.

Meanwhile we concentrate on the children, and since few of us can afford to buy them the lovely toys of the catalogues, we discover that one can do wonders with a little ingenuity, a certain supply of odds and ends and a lick of paint. Wasn't it Axel Munthe who wrote something

about: ". . . so long as they are real children, unconscious of the value of money, the little ones prefer the puppet à treize sous to the smartest silk-gowned doll." Real children are easy to please, and the grown-ups seem, this year, to be less pleasure-grabbing, which is a very different thing to pleasure-loving.

I MADE a somewhat rash statement last week when I said that one can burn up rubbish and cooking left-overs in the kitchen stove. I have had horrid occasion to reconsider that remark. A chicken, sent to me by post from friends in the country, was held up for over a week by the P.O. strikers. When it arrived it practically jumped out of the postman's box, crawled up the stairs and rang the bell. (At least, it would have rung the bell only the electric current was "off.")



"Postman," one of the Van Gogh paintings at the Tate Gallery which constitute the largest exhibition of the artist's work ever held in this country. It was opened by the Netherlands Ambassador, and the painter's nephew helped to arrange it

We donned our 1939 gas masks that the French Government, being so rich, has never reclaimed, and got busy. Half-an-hour later *Police Secours* came nosing round, and were sorry for it! They had been rung up by a suspicious neighbour. They gave one glance, giggled and went away, but refused to take the *corpus delicti* with them. It now reposes, in an old sponge bag thickly covered with ashes, at the bottom of the dustbin waiting for the dustmen to stop their strike. I don't know what will happen when they do come round and empty it into their cart. . . . After this incident, when I think that Landru is supposed to have incinerated several of his lady friends in the little kitchen-stove of his country cottage at Gambais, my respect for him increases.

I SAW a very lovely portrait of Jeanne Aubert at the Art Français gallery this week by Charles Cerny, who was also showing some very fine still-lives. The portrait was a study in whites and greys, providing a perfect setting for Jeanne Aubert's blonde beauty. The gleaming sheen of the soft folds of her white satin robe d'intérieur contrasted with the matt ivory of the grand piano against which she was leaning just as she does on the stage during her inimitable *tour de chant*.

Amongst the crowd on the opening day I saw Mme. Paul Dechanel, as charming as ever and always in black with the high dog-collar of pearls that she invariably wears; Princess Galitzine, M. Olympe Herriot, Mme. Remi Schelcher, who always looks so delightful with her close-cut crop of dark curls, Mme. Léon Volterra, who took twenty-four hours to come from London by devious routes, and Princess Fahmy-Bey, very much befeathered and with a new goggle-eyed lap-dog that looked like a Chinese mascot. Jeanne Aubert was also present, of course, looking very lovely in a picture hat with a sweeping plume. In fact, this was a gathering of gorgeous hats as well as fine pictures and beautiful women.

It is said, by the way, that the Comtesse de la Moissonniere's innovation "Hats for Hire" is catching on. All the milliners (of renown) in Paris are up in arms, of course, but it looks as if there might be something in the idea, for people who like hats or haven't much hair . . . or much money!



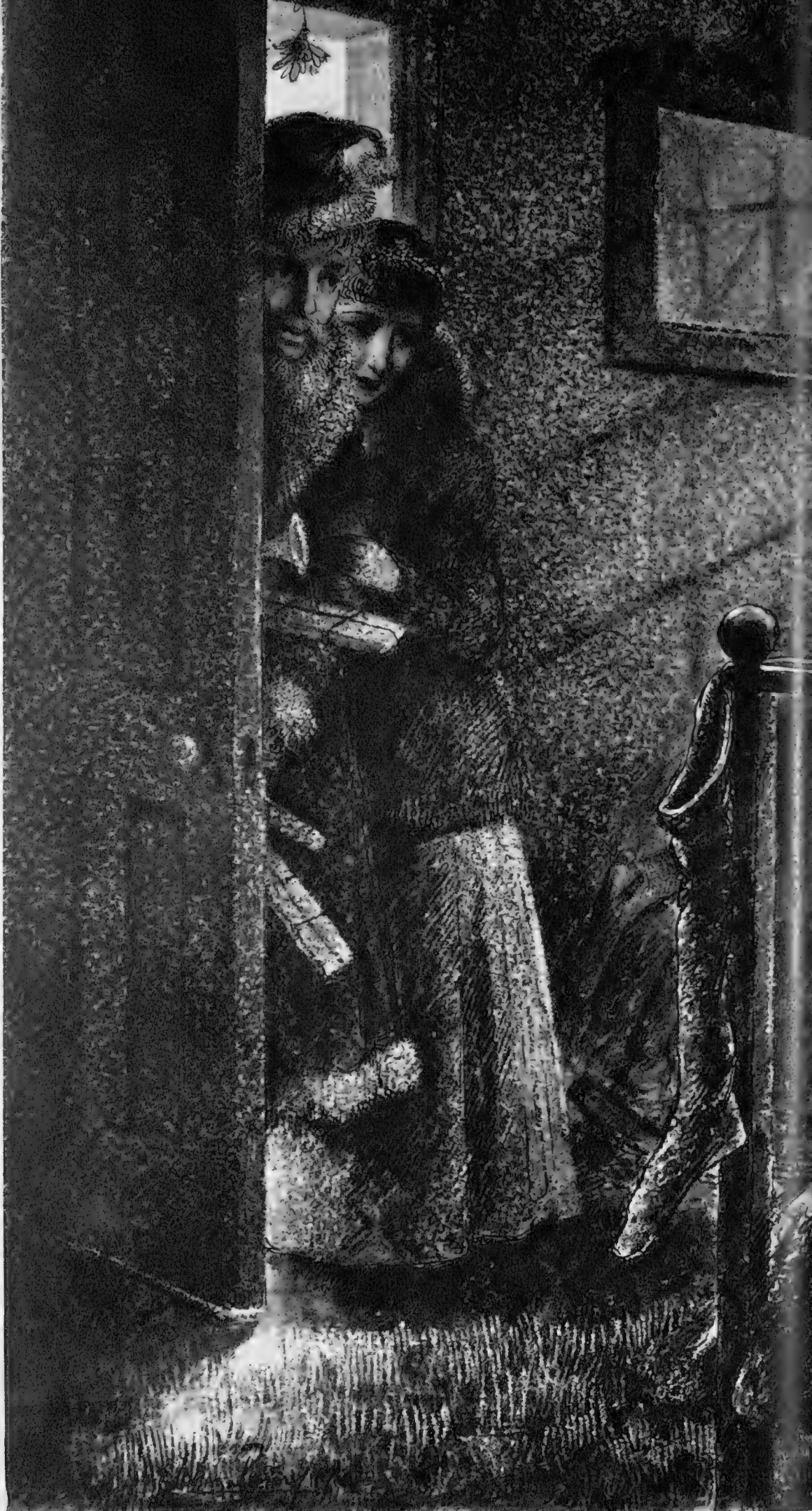
# MIDNIGHT ALERT

or

## *The Vigil Rewarded*

To-night countless children will hang up stockings (the largest that can be begged or borrowed) in the certainty that next morning they will be satisfactorily distended and knobbly ; but less certain that they will be able to fulfil that ambition of successive juvenile generations and catch Santa Claus actually at work. Here, however, *Tatler* artist John Berry has recorded one such triumph of excited wakefulness. Perhaps the door creaked, or a foot was placed incautiously. Whatever happened, it was the signal for the breaking of an illusion ; an illusion which is—and maybe it is unique in this—as happy in its ending as in its cherishing

*Drawing by  
John Berry*











Decorations by Wysard

D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS

# Standing By ...

**B**ALLETOMANES are such popeyed cretins, if one may say so without offence, that it's quite possible that they swallow without question a ballet-critic's recent mumble to the effect that King David's dance before the Ark was probably a kind of Irish jig.

It was, a Talmudic scholar once assured us, a grave hieratic dance, something like the Dance of the Seises at Seville Cathedral at Vespers of the Immaculate Conception (December 8). This, as every lover of that lovely city knows, is a kind of slow, solemn minuet with castanets, performed by sixteen boys in the plumed hats and blue-and-white costume of the time of Philip III, and nothing is more gracious and beautiful. Balletomanes often forget that huge ballerinas were not tossed around to any extent until about halfway through the Eighteenth Century, when the Franco-Swiss maestro Noverre turned down the Saraband, the Passacaglia, and other dignified evolutions and began that Plastic Expression of Dramatic Ideas which has made so many sympathisers hot and embarrassed ever since.

## Afterthought

**N**O doubt the Balletomane Lunatic-Fringe of the period didn't let Noverre get away with it unscathed.

"Stap me, what a Glifsade! 'Tis a veritable Earthquake!"

"'Twill go hard but yonder Mopfy lands on her Fanny in the Orchestra! ... Zounds, what a Womp!"

"Rarely hath a Piece ftunk fo abominably in the Noftails of the Polite!"

However, the Noverre technique prevailed, and hence, so to speak, the deluge.

## Cutie

**S**TORIES that Mistinguett began her stage career by being patted on the head by Molière have been pretty well exploded by her London visit, we gather. It was probably Beaumarchais.

What has not been cleared up, so far, is the rumour that (a) Mistinguett is an Old Etonian, and (b) that it was in her honour that the celebrated lines were composed:

Match me such marvel, save in Eastern clime—  
Some rose-red cutie half as old as Time.

The Eton story is that she visited her old school many years later and on leaving handed the Provost half-a-crown to scatter among the

boys. Which is quite absurd, for had Mistinguett been at Eton Gray would have noted it in his *Ode on a Distant Prospect*, etc.

Alas, regardless of their doom

The little victims play!

Nor sense have they of ills to come

Nor care beyond today—

Excepting Mistinguett, and maybe

They seize her hoop and slap that baby.

It can't have been Beaumarchais, it must have been Beau Brummel.

## Warlock

**L**AST time we saw that eminent Satanist, the late Mr. Aleister Crowley—self-labelled "the wickedest man in the world," but how did he know?—we remembered from a Medieval treatise that the Devil does not reward his buddies very well.

It was a soft spring dusk of 1930 outside the Dôme on the Boulevard Montparnasse, and all the Bohemians were taking their *apéritif*, especially those from Golders Green and Pooskabunkie, Mo. The Satanist looked shoddy, shuffling, and depressed, though still practising his wellknown piercing-eye trick, to no effect



whatsoever. He seemed to have lost all that evil *panache* which once ravished Bloomsbury, by all accounts. A little later he published a mystical novel of exhausting dullness, of which we noted one extract only:

Cyrl's tone transformed his asinine utterance into something so Sybilline, Oracular, Delphic, Cumæan, that his interlocutor almost trembled . . .

Exactly like the Black Magician himself, in fact. Many fools trembled before Mr. Crowley in his prime. Nevertheless we maintain he got a far rawer deal from the Master of Witches than Faust, for he was allowed to decline into total obscurity.

## Steed

**A**TINY thinker recently describing the bicycle as "essentially democratic" was, of course, raving. Any fashionable journal of the late 1890's like *The Lady Cyclist* or *The Wheelwoman and Society Cycling News* (both of which then flourished, we find from the files) would have had the pants off him in fifteen seconds. The Wheel Club would have spat in his eye.

Half the Peerage, male and female, all devilish keen bicyclists, belonged to the Wheel Club, which had its headquarters in Kensington (an aged boulevardier tells us) and a tent at Ascot. Footmen were in attendance to pump, screw and oil, and the Blue Hungarian Band played while the Beau Monde pedalled round and round, exchanging fearless epigrams. Why no bicycle ever got into *The Dolly Dialogues* we can't imagine, unless young Mr. Carter, who provides most of the *mots* in that classic, was a mere poltroon. In which case you may bet the Dowager spoke to her lovely daughter about him before long at luncheon.

"That scintillatin' young ass Carter comin' to tea again?"

"Yes, Mamma."

"Tell him every wheelwoman in Society calls him a screamin' sissy."

"Yes, Mamma."

"Tell him the President of the Wheel Club is thinkin' of settin' about him with his spare pump."

"Yes, Mamma."

As the President was an Earl, there's probably nothing Mr. Carter would have adored more than being thrashed by him with a bicycle-pump on the Wheel Club lawns, while the Blue Hungarians played *Valse Bleue*. The Golden Age, egad; the Golden Age.



## Chant

To those afflicted by the ignoble travesty of Christmas forced on the Race once again by the inky boys we recommend the chanting of the Prose of the Ass (Diocese of Beauvais), to which a refined person was lately alluding with a twitter of horror.

The fourth verse of this glorious early Medieval sequence might have been composed specially for a parade of Britain's leading cultural thinkers at this moment:

Ecce magnis auribus,  
Subjugalis filius,  
Asinus egregius,  
Asinorum dominus!

Which we take leave to render, roughly:

Lo! with mighty ears extended,  
Calm and lofty, grave and splendid,  
See, in majesty he passes,  
Ass stupendous, Ass of Asses!

The original plainsong tune is unhappily lost, but any good modern musician like Vaughan Williams or Walton could make quite a fanfare of it for (e.g.) future Unesco Congresses. A final verse might be added:

Let us then with joyful noise  
Hail the busy Culture Boys,  
Laying down the Nordic Law,  
Hip, hip, hip! Hee-haw! Hee-haw!

Only the natural good breeding of the untutored Celtic peasant prevents us from verging on disrespect for those world-leaders, maybe.

## Glimpse

HAVING lived in Gray's Inn (a nightly feature of residence in those dignified old chambers being the muffled noise made by adjacent lawyers praying at their bedsides for more and better crime), we can sympathise with a legal chap recently mourning for the long-vanished Gray's Inn Coffee-House, once the navel, so to speak, of that cosy world.

To judge of the progress of the London Pub, consider Dickens's glimpse of Gray's Inn Coffee-House in *David Copperfield*:

The sanded floor . . . The shining tables, in which I saw myself reflected in unruffled depths of old mahogany. . . . The comfortable green curtains, with their pure brass rods, snugly enclosing the boxes. . . . The two large coal-fires, brightly burning. . . . The rows of decanters, burly as if with the consciousness of pipes of expensive old port wine below . . .

Too good for lawyers, you howl, and we agree. Any comfortable modern bowing-ken suits those frightful boys more, and the sight of Benchers in Hall lowering what remains of the vintage port in their cellars still makes us ill. Nevertheless even without the Coffee-House and in the 1930's Gray's Inn was an oasis. Living among lawyers does nobody any good, but a noted cricketer lived on our staircase. To the influences emanating from behind his oak we attribute our present virtue. You can't buy us now. At least, not at your price.

## Tidy

A SHRILL cry to Auntie Times from a neat London girl complaining that "cartons, bus-tickets, paper bags, and broken bottles are scattered anywhere and everywhere" omitted one very slovenly feature of Europe's most lawless city, and we trust the Anti-Litter League will make an issue of it.

Namely, there is no tidy means at present of clearing the pavements of the bodies of citizens—especially old ladies—knocked out in London every day by the Black Market thug-population. Our simple suggestion is large wire baskets fixed to every lamp-post and marked "Please Dump Your Dopes Here." (Abandoned babies included.) Foreign visitors often complain to us of this untidy feature—we generally tell them to take a running jump into the Seine, the Tiber, the Manzanares, or the Zuyder Zee—and we recently heard a lady in pince-nez remark "Such litter is not merely a disgrace, it is *un-English*."

At Scotland Yard they are, as one might expect, baffled; in bowler hats, soft hats, and great bare aching brilliantined heads. The snag seems to be that if they urge the Black Market boys to be tidy, they will make themselves unpopular. Surely (etc., etc.). One cannot but deplore (etc., etc.). And a hey-diddle-diddle.

## EMMWOOD'S AVIARY: NO. 16

A bird of passage, the observational facts about which fail to support its mythical reputation



## The Grotto Grouse—or Red-Breasted Chimney Creeper

(*Sumthinastæ-Upthchimnæ*)

**ADULT MALE:** General colour above, ruddy-fulvous, inclined to be spikily crested; beak bulbous and roseate, becomes extremely roseate when caught in a chimae; mandibles blue. The lower mandibles are feathered with, often untidy, beardlike growths. Wing coverts red, white and woolly at extremities; thighs and rump feathers red; legs tufted at the knee-joints, leathery; feet, all varieties, including Russian, inclined to be snowy.

**HABITS:** This elusive little bird is an annual visitor to our hearths and roof-tops. Its plaintive little cry, a kind of "Wotabartyerolli!" may be constantly heard in and about our cities' environs at Christmas-time. The bird will nest in any grotto, especially if dimly and eerily lighted.

Reliable witnesses state that the bird has a habit of perching at the entrance to its grotto and, when not frightening small mammals with its raucous cries and sly grimaces, trying to induce them to venture

within the grotto entrance. The fact that the small mammals usually return from this itinerary screaming with fright inclines one to the view that the Grotto Grouse is carnivorous. At other times the bird spends much effort in scrabbling and tumbling about in chimneys.

The bird has an aggravating little habit of secreting baubles in socks and/or stockings, which is most uncomfortable if not discovered until the shoes have been affixed.

**HABITATS:** All grottoes, chimneys and well-known store places, especially where small mammals are known to abound. It may be exceptionally amusing to the observer should the Grotto Grouse be found in a chimney with its rump feathers down.

**ADULT FEMALE:** So far not encountered, although she has been heard offering advice to the male when caught in a chimney.





**Oxford Were Easy Winners** in this year's cross-country race against Cambridge, the start of which is shown here. The fifty-seventh in the series, it was run over the Roehampton course, which rain had made very heavy. Oxford have now won 26 of the races, and Cambridge 31

## Sabretache

# Pictures in the Fire

THE erudite gentleman who said that the more things change the more they are the same thing, has often been rated a bit complex; but if he was thinking of the festival we celebrate to-morrow, he was right. It is inevitable that the environment of Christmas must change, but in itself it is eternal. Many things have slipped away from us, but at this time of the year there is no need to turn down an empty glass, even with things at their present prices.

The chair is not empty. Crippled, cabined and confined we may be, but the saying about the longest lane is still true. Waits, wassail bowls, witches, ghosts and turkeys and chins have all sadly deteriorated, some more than others, but still the mainspring is unbroken. Waits began to decline when the beery-voiced gentlemen with their magnum of rum and their cracked cornet à piston were replaced by the village organist with his tuning-fork, two trebles, a tenor and an intermezzo-soprano; and the descent to the little boys of to-day, who start singing about Good King Wenceslas on December 1st, or even Guy Fawkes' Day, and almost demand payment, was inevitable.

As to wassail bowls, you could not buy the ingredients even from The Blacks; and witches, though they have ceased to ride on broomsticks and hit up a nasty noise on Blasted Heaths, still do not take much finding if you keep your eyes well skinned.

### Alas! Poor Ghosts!

THESE hard-working spectres have come off the worst over Christmas, for not only has there grown up a generation that has hardly heard of Anne Boleyn on the Queen's Walk in The Tower, and would not recognise even Henry VIII, if they saw him out hunting near Reading, but all their best haunts have been turned into either schools for the ill-behaved or glorified pubs.

What hope has even the most efficient ghost? There may still be a shadowy chance for Julius Cæsar, because, apparently, the Roman Occupation is vividly remembered at some of our smartest eating-houses—but, on a general reckoning, it is a case of "Alas! Poor Ghost!" I do not believe that even if the baby-roaster, Wild Dayrell, with his spectral pack of hounds, held a lawn meet on war-scarred Newbury race-course—fairly close to lovely Littlecote, where the ghastly deed was done—this *nil admirari* generation would take any notice of him; yet at one time he was something like Public

Terror No. 1. It is a bit tough on the poor shades, but that's the way of it. However, what's the use of mizzling, because, even if we have no flowing bowl in which to drown the sorrow of the drab present, or warm the hope of a less-Stracheyed future, that unquenchable spirit still survives and bids us wish one another a Merry Christmas with a thousand million blessings for the New Year.

### Up-to-date Australia!

A LETTER recently received from Melbourne with the postmark November 21st, bore stamps with H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth's head on them. We, on this spot, have not seen any stamp commemorating the Royal wedding, and it seems doubtful whether we shall. My correspondent tells me that the broadcast of the ceremony in the Abbey was particularly well received. He writes: "The choir and organ were crystal clear. An old ally of mine plays the organ at the Abbey, so I must write and tell him how marvellously it came over." It was the best thing the B.B.C. has done, and reports of a similar nature appear to have come in from everywhere.

### A Racing Admiral

THIS is a note of personal regret at the death of one who was amongst my most frequent and valued correspondents. Admiral Lumsden of Pitcaple, like almost every sailor that I have met, was keenly interested in the horse, particularly in the breeding of the thoroughbred. He used to go racing a lot in his younger days and, I am content to believe, was almost as keen on fox-hunting as another friend of mine, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Walter Cowan, D.S.O. and Bar, the only sailor, so far as I know, who is the Honorary Colonel of a Cavalry Regiment (the 18th Tiwana Lancers, I.A., as was). He served with them through all the desert war until he was made prisoner at Tobruk, after firing away his last round.

Admiral Lumsden was one of a long line of his clan which had been seated at Pitcaple Castle, Aberdeenshire, for many long years, and reached the green old age of eighty-three. He was a scientific student of horse-breeding and a very well-informed one; an absolute sleuth on pedigrees and set me many a puzzle. Some of them floored me as well as many far wiser than myself, to whom I fled for aid. For part of his naval service he was the directing genius of the Royal Indian Marine, the successor of

the old Royal Indian Navy, which flourished in John Company's days and for some time afterwards, and he was a naval A.D.C. to the reigning Viceroy.

His early service was as a midshipman in H.M.S. *Invincible* at the bombardment of Arabi Pasha's forts at Alexandria, which were much more heavily gunned than our best battleships of the period. *Invincible* was the sister-ship of *Inflexible*, also present at Alexandria, and they were then believed by their constructors to be pretty tough nuts. They had one little defect, however: they were protected by only 24 ins. of wrought-iron armour over their vitals—about a third of the ship. With the other two-thirds the lightest guns could have played the cat and banjo. The enemy might not always have been so obliging as to fire at the central citadel, where they mounted four 80-ton muzzle-loading guns in two echeloned turrets. And they were the crack ships of their day! The records say that they were bad in a sea and steered like mules. I think I am right in saying that the late Admiral Lumsden was the gallant snotty who rolled one of Arabi's shells overboard before it had time to explode. War was very picturesque in those days!

### Ned Kelly, Cricket and So Forth

A MOST interesting correspondent in Melbourne who previously wrote and told me about the fuss that was being made over a new film of the last stand of Ned Kelly and his famous gang of bushrangers has sent me a few more details. He writes:

The Ned Kelly film rumpus has run its delightful course, the highlights being a letter from a local historian describing the police as the most frightful blackguards, and poor Ned as a true son of Robin Hood. There is also one from the hero of Bardia proud of his road-worthy ancestor and admitting being blown up in the desert, but indignantly denying the loss of a leg of which the Press had pruned him. Now a local film company has been formed at Benalla to give the dinkum story with, we are afraid, honours evenly divided, a suitable mist of romance and no feelings damaged. I should think you could float a film company or anything else in the bush just now; they are getting £75 or thereabouts per bale for their wool, about three times pre-war price. However, no one grudges our primary producers their good luck. They seem to be eternally pitted against bush fires, blow-flies, droughts, over-drafts, floods and grasshoppers in this strange and fascinating country. The Indian cricketers are putting in some good work here. They have a delightfully free-and-easy style of batting and the matches will be well worth watching.





# Scoreboard



THE Christmas Handicap; Oratory Stakes; run in Dublin, at the Annual Dinner of the Insurance Institute of Ireland; First Prize to the Minister of Industry and Commerce, for saying: "I foresee, on the assumption that international conditions are favourable, developments of great significance. There are hundreds of new

industrial projects listed in the Department of Industry and Commerce ready to go ahead when some assurance of the availability of capital equipment can be given or some certainty of continuing supplies of essential materials becomes possible." Or, as the customer said to the wine merchant:

*"If I had the money, and you had the booze,  
Life would be one long wonderful cruise,  
With objects of interest, all in twos."*

Maybe I am a mere plagiarist, and these were really the lines thrown off, together with his collar and tie, by William Wordsworth to his sister Dorothy while paddling in Lake Windermere. Be that as it may, as Henry VIII. remarked on first seeing Anne of Cleves, hats off and a fanfare on euphonia to the Irish Minister of Industry and Commerce. But, how pleasant it was to see his audience pour forth from the dinner, gastronomically satisfied and economically

convinced. How agreeable to be forced by urchins wearing their grandfathers' trilby hats to buy a newspaper which must be raised from the lap with conscious effort instead of being snatched down from the slightest breeze. How nostalgic to read therein of turkeys awarded for winning the Monthly Medal with  $100-24=76$ .

I THOUGHT, as I side-stepped two taxis and a statue of Daniel O'Connell, of how the news-editor of a still-lamented London daily, having, long, long ago, won a 16-lb. turkey in the office Christmas Draw, loved the bird for an hour, then, as he walked homeward over Waterloo Bridge, flung it suddenly into the Thames and said, "Do they take me for a ruddy porter?" O tempora, O turkey!

In Dublin again, I missed, and shall miss evermore, that dealer, of exquisite courtesy and understanding, who remarked, "We shall come to no harm in this matter, and if we do, whoi, the catering in the Mountjoy jail is still of the best." Ostensibly, our visit was to see a match of Rugby football. Friendliness is the password of the International ground at Lansdowne Road. We showed our tickets, ham-mindedly, at the wrong entrance. The janitor smiled, as who should say, "What is a gate or so on a Saturday afternoon?"

How polite, too, and informative, the crowd. The band had not sewn up their Overture when I had been told, freely, the professional and private pursuits of all the home Fifteen. "Nae bother," as a titanic forward of Scotland used to say when temperamental opponents numbed their knuckles on his jaw, "nae bother at a'."

IN our village, Shamateurism has unexpectedly reared its double head. Mr. Hy. Quagger, a former Parish Councillor and a semi-finalist in the American Darts Tournament, has alleged that his next opponent, Mr. Albert Codd, was once foreman in a feather factory, and is therefore, by implication, a Darts professional. Mr. Codd, who is a noted poultry fancier, when interviewed on his way home in a wheelbarrow, was understood to say, "Arsenal 3, M.C.C. 31 for 2; as to feathers, tell old Quagger he knows what to do with them."

EQUESTRIAN intelligence. In the Quaritch Vale the horseless-rider has been seen again, once in Kidney Copse, twice in Six-Acre Bottom. Last Thursday, for the first time, we hunted our own pack, the Mulligatawny Mongrels. They disliked the experience. Fortunately, heavy snow was bad for scent. The meet, to suit local business interests, was timed for 3.45 p.m. Informality was the keynote.

*One came with twenty icicles  
Suspended from his pate;  
Three more on purple tricycles,  
I on a roller-skate.*

There was no find; therefore, no check. Then, layer on layer, the night came on.

*A happy Christmas to you all;  
Married and single, great and small.*

Let nothing, absolutely nothing, you dismay.

*R.C. Robertson-Flanagan.*



The Tipperary Foxhounds' Opening Meet

M. A. Keating

Widely known as "The Gallant Tipps," the Tipperary had their opening meet at Feihard, and the picture above shows them moving off led by Viscount Suidale (centre), who is Joint-M.F.H. with Mrs. A. Masters, Mr. Conor Carrigan, ex-Joint-M.F.H. and a director of B.O.A.C. (extreme left), and Mrs. D. Grey, ex-M.F.H. of the West Waterford Hunt. The Tipperary started in 1820, though the neighbourhood had been hunted by a private pack some years previously. The country is nearly all grass, but contains much stiff jumping





## Hans Andersen on the Screen

One of the most poignant stories in the literature of faery, Hans Andersen's *The Red Dancing Shoes*, is now being filmed by Michael Powell under the title *Red Shoes*. The director has disdained the use of facile technical tricks, and has set out to tell a story with the fewest possible distractions. Part of the action consists of a fourteen-minute ballet, in which the principal dancers are Moira Shearer, Massine, and Robert Helpmann. Above and opposite are some of the original designs by Hein Heckroth

Elizabeth Bowen's

# Book Shelf

"English Home-Life"

"The Donkey Inside"

"Killer Mine"

"The Lady of Glentworth Grange"

CHRISTINA HOLE's *English Home-Life: 1500 to 1800* (Batsford; 15s.) is an ideal family book for Christmas and the New Year. Miss Hole has been for some time an established authority on English folk-lore, and her *Witchcraft in England*—"A handy account of an extraordinary delusion," one reviewer called it—was fascinating.

This time she is more concrete. "I have," she says, "attempted to describe some aspects of the ordinary home-life of country-dwellers in England during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It [this book] is necessarily a record of small and familiar things, of those daily habits, thoughts, superstitions and prejudices which form the groundwork of existence for most of us. I have not dealt with any of the great events which make these centuries so important in our history; they are mentioned only in so far as they affected family life and modified the habits of those who lived through them. What is recorded here is the simpler and more intimate side of living. . . ."

More and more, I think, do we, half-way through this distracted twentieth century, keep our hold on life—perhaps, even, our hold on reality—through its simple, intimate, concrete side. Never has the maintenance of the home involved more trouble; but, equally, never has the value of what we are maintaining stood out more clearly. The cynic perhaps might say that the decline of those alternatives of the old song, pleasures and palaces means that home, now, has dam' well got to be sweet. But myself, I think our renewed strong love of home to be a reversion to something deep in nature. The chromium illusion has broken down: we are back to the primitive brass tacks.

And, accordingly, nearer our ancestors. For, as does strongly appear from Miss Hole's book, there has never not been a time when the English home has not owed its existence to belief, energy and love. The country house, no less than the country cottage, has from the beginning had a dynamic core. And never has the English home not at once reflected and absorbed history, or felt—while it has continued to stand up four-square against—the winds of change.

CHANGE, in the period covered by Miss Hole, was, it is true, in the main benevolent: progress was at work. Up to the beginning of the Tudors, for instance, isolated houses had to be fortifiable: the idea of building for looks, light, convenience and leisure was, when it came, quite new. The crabbed, twisted, somewhat secretive pattern of mediævalism disappeared. Ceilings rose, windows heightened and widened, staircases became affairs of beauty; and accordingly, life in those new houses could begin to be stylish, while still sturdy and fearless. That this made for an expansion of human nature one cannot doubt—myself, I have oftener wondered what must have been the mentality of generations perpetually knocking their heads against beams and having to lie down on their stomachs in order to look out of upstairs windows.

In *English Home-Life* we are given—with a categoricalness that is not only never boring but, I find, quite brilliantly the reverse—an account of the architecture, garden lay-out, furnishing, interior decoration, and all-round planning and functioning of homes throughout three centuries. To meals, their changing hours, and the immense variation of dishes

that composed them, there rightly has been allotted substantial space—hungry as we may fancy ourselves to be, I doubt still whether we could work our ways over a laden board as dauntlessly as did our intrepid forbears. Though, as against this, they ate comparatively seldom—they were up and around, for instance, in the mornings for some hours before it occurred to them to eat or drink anything at all—by *that* time, beer and meat pie naturally came in well. Breakfast, an innovation, features in English home history comparatively late. The dinner-hour receded as people began to eat more during the early day.

DEFINITELY, the home was a community, to which every soul contributed a lively interest as well as the playing of an active part. On the subject of the relationship with servants Miss Hole is particularly interesting: she confirms my own idea that in the old-fashioned household the servants had the satisfaction of feeling themselves part of a going concern; the gusto with which their masters and mistresses conducted life infected them. "Although," says Miss Hole, "there was so much to be done, the work was not unduly heavy since it was shared among so many, and the daily round was cheered by variety and congenial companionship." True, the servant was occasionally beaten; but this very act, on the part of the employer, showed spontaneity and an absence of stand-offishness; and beatings were no less vigorously and affectionately meted out to children and young persons of the family.

As to children, it was, as is shown in the earlier part of Miss Hole's book, their business to grow up and cut out any nonsense as soon as possible: the child of Tudor and Stuart



The Girl Who Could Not Stop Herself Dancing: Two more ballet designs for the film "Red Shoes"

times was not only dressed like a miniature grown-up, but expected to conduct itself as one. However, with the eighteenth century—or, in fact, with its eve—there appeared a certain softening, or indulgence, towards the infant state. Children's books were produced; and the fact that children tend to prance and bound around the place was officially admitted by family portrait groups. Infant mortality was, in the earlier centuries covered by this book, high: it showed a perceptible, if not strongly marked, decrease towards 1800. On the other hand, those who succeeded in surviving the infant years tended to grow up hardy—which one needed to be!

**B**IRTH, marriage and death were accompanied by ceremonials worthy of their status in a family's life: those ceremonials (varying, naturally, from generation to generation, from century to century) have been minutely and fascinatingly chronicled in *English Home-Life*: they must, one feels, have been a tremendous outlet at seasons of joy and gaiety; and, no less, an impersonal stalwart support at times of grief. . . . The position of woman, in the home, has been studied: in the main, one gathers, there was no fear of the mistress of a household having to regard herself as "a mere housewife": on the contrary, she was a person embarked (and, in most cases, embarked young) upon a strenuous, exacting but rewarding career. An ideal imaginary picture of the housewife was set out by Gervase Markham in 1615. She should be

. . . of chaste thought, stout courage, patient, untired, watchful, diligent, witty, pleasant, constant in friendship, full of good neighbourhood, wise in discourse . . . secret in her affairs, comfortable in her counsels, and generally skilful in all the worthy knowledges which do belong to her vocation.

Miss Hole has divided her book into two parts: 1500-1700 and 1700-1800. I should like to make clear that, though in my review I may have generalised as to the past of English home life, she never does so: the changes in each and every aspect of the home, during three centuries, have been traced and stated by her with a fidelity to which this book owes, most of all, its outstanding worth. No, change has never been absent; time has never stood still.

She has, also, chapters on subjects on which I have not room to expand—the part played by religion in home life; successive modes and ideals of education; transport (perpetual country problem!), and pastimes and pleasures. . . . *English Home-Life* has so many illustrations as to be almost, in the happiest sense, a picture-book: conversation pieces, family groups, "interiors," sporting scenes, and various flying shots of people enjoying themselves at parties—card-playing, dancing or tripping up the servants—

abound. The coloured cover shows a nice Stuart family sitting around the fire, in a lofty, pictured, windowed and curtained room.

**"THE DONKEY INSIDE"** (Hamish Hamilton; 9s. 6d.) is an enjoyable Ludwig Bemelmans travel book: scene, Ecuador. Nothing ordinary ever happens to Mr. Bemelmans—who else, for instance, would have witnessed a cow, "its eyes wide with hysteria," being swung slowly across the ship's breakfast table at which he sat? And no one else, I think, could have registered with so much sympathy the not un-extraordinary Ecuadorean scene. Mr. Bemelmans has made three trips to South America: he has found everything most rhapsodical and preposterous in that continent to be epitomised in Ecuador. His zest and endurance seem to have stopped at nothing: demonstrably, Ecuador needs taking.

We have our first note on the country's internal affairs from Mr. Bemelmans' Guayaquil acquaintance, the Count—local historian, perpetual wearer of a white rose for sentimental reasons. The Count says: "We have a revolution here every Thursday afternoon at half-past two and our Government is run like a night-club." After that, a shaking experience of the Guayaquil and Quito railway; then, the amenities of Quito, followed by what would be for any other hand indescribable journeys into the interior—the whole is a lyric of the claptrap, with a deathly side: at any moment you may have a donkey dancing over a precipice. There are the natives, and there are the gone-native. At the same time, the author, both by his brush and pen—four double-page illustrations of his, in colour, blaze in this book—has conveyed an effect of torridity, of extravagance, majesty and queeriness. He offers us a country just beyond the bounds of everybody's experience, including his own (*did he, in fact, dream it?*), but just not impossible. But might one not do worse?—

everything runs so pleasantly, if not smoothly: in the main, all ends well. For instance:

There is some difficulty with servants. All the servants are Indians. They are very sensitive, easily offended. They usually leave in the middle of a dinner party. When they are scolded for something they become sad, take their gloves off, and go home to their mountains and sit under a tree and eat bananas for a few days. Unannounced, and without explanation, they return, kiss your hand, and say that they have missed you.

Try *The Donkey Inside* for seasonal holiday travel into the Equatorial sun.



**"KILLER MINE"** (Collins; 8s. 6d.) is a wholly spell-binding thriller by Hammond Innes, author of *The Lonely Ski-er*. This time, instead of the blinding dazzle and sinister silence of the Dolomite snows, we have evil afoot in old mine-workings—the tension and sense of doom which Mr. Innes knows so well how to create is, in this case, heightened by claustrophobia. The time is post-war, and we are confronted by a group of violent characters who—finding no place for themselves in a world at so-called peace—are playing their own dark game: they stop at nothing. The narrator, Jim Pryce, is an ex-miner, deserter: he has been shipped from Italy and run ashore in the dark

on the Cornish coast in order to further the nefarious purposes of one Captain Manack. On the cliff-top near the mouth of the mine-workings stands Cripples' Ease, a Wuthering-Heights-like house in which the terrors of the present are overlapped by tragedies of the past: here Pryce, Cornish-born, is to learn of his mother's long-ago fate, and is to swear to avenge her; but here, too, he falls in with his only friend, Manack's half-sister, the young girl Kitty. . . . The plot needs close following: *Killer Mine* is not a book over which you will fall asleep.

## RECORD OF THE WEEK

**I** HOPE, once and for all time, British people will cease repeating that they are not a musical nation. It's rubbish for us to go on saying such a thing when we are obviously showing that it isn't true.

There is in our midst one of the foremost composers of modern music in the world to-day. I refer to Benjamin Britten, who has given us a great deal of worth-while material, including his operas *Peter Grimes*, *Albert Herring* and *The Rape of Lucretia*. His music will live long after any of us in the world of records. It is a joy to hear his enchanting Folk Songs, *Foggy Dew*, *The*

*Plough Boy* and *Come ye not from Newcastle*, sung in such fine voice, with such good diction and feeling by Peter Pears. The composer accompanies the soloist on the piano, and neither of them puts a foot wrong.

This is one of the most delightful records I have heard this year, or, for that matter, in any other year, and I can only look forward to many more such genuine works of art from Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears. (H.M.V. DA. 1873.)

Robert Tredinnick.

**"THE LADY OF GLENTWITH GRANGE"** is a long short story by Wilkie Collins. The master-touch of that Victorian hand which gave us *The Moonstone* and *The Woman in White* is to be recognised in this tale of a lonely manor and of its mistress's brooding over the past. And what a past—sensational were its villainies! This little book, Christmas-card-size, elegantly printed and with a period wood-cut on the cover, is No. 2 in the "Atlantis" Series, 2s. 6d. each; a nice innovation of Eyre and Spottiswoode's.



# THEY WERE MARRIED

The "Tatler's" Review



**Borwick — Grayson**

Capt. Peter Borwick, The Somerset Light Infantry (P.A.), only son of Sir Thomas and Lady Borwick, married Miss Monica Grayson, of 87, Camden Hill Court, W.8, only daughter of the late Cdr. and Mrs. Godfrey Grayson, at Holy Trinity, Brompton



**Thomas — Whyte**

Sir William James Cooper Thomas, Bt., elder son of the late Sir William Thomas, and of Lady Thomas, of the Angel Hotel, Cardiff, married Miss Freida Dunbar Whyte, younger daughter of the late Mr. F. A. Whyte, and of Mrs. Whyte, of 162, Cranmer Court, Sloane Avenue, S.W.3, at St. Saviour's, Walton Street



**Beckwith-Smith — Newman**

Mr. Peter Beckwith-Smith, elder son of the late Major-Gen. M. B. Beckwith-Smith, and of Mrs. Beckwith-Smith, of Aberarder, Strathnairn, Inverness-shire, married Miss Annabel Newman, eldest daughter of Sir Cecil Newman, Bt., and Lady Newman, of Burloes, Royston, Hertfordshire, at St. Mark's, North Audley Street



**Keyes — Packe**

Lt. Lord Keyes, R.N., younger son of the late Admiral of the Fleet Lord Keyes, and of Lady Keyes, married Miss Grizelda Mary Packe, second daughter of the late Lt.-Col. William Packe, and of Mrs. Packe, of Elmfield, Bromley Common, Kent, at Holy Trinity, Bromley Common



**Mortimer — Denison-Pender**

Major Roger F. Mortimer, of 3, West Halkin Street, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Mortimer, married Miss Cynthia Sydney Denison-Pender, youngest daughter of Major and Mrs. H. Denison-Pender, of Strangways, Marnhull, Dorset, at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge

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## Clothed for Comfort



● Wrap-around coats and comfortable hats for the grey days are a current preoccupation. The hats and coats illustrated are suitable for the country and for cold days in Town. The tuxedo style swing-back model (right) in stone-colour fleece with brown fur fabric trimming is from a collection of similar models at Moss Brothers. The cosy grey velour swagger style—by Windsmoor, is at John Barker's. The two felt Bock and Engel hats are of expanding felt with Lastex yarn incorporated where crown and brim join to ensure comfort and cling. From Leading Stores.

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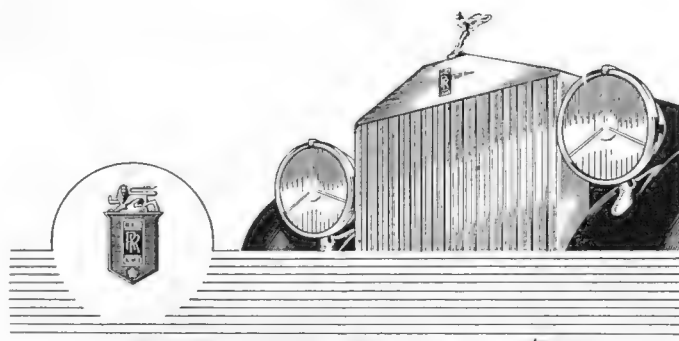
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## The "Tatler's" Register of ENGAGEMENTS



*Miss Bridget Beryl Andreae*, fifth daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward P. Andreae, of Tandridge Court, Oxted, Surrey, who is to be married on February 7 to Mr. W. Norman Hunter Smart, only son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Hunter Smart, of 34 Morningside Drive, Edinburgh



Lendate

*Miss Denise Nell*, younger daughter of the late Mrs. D. M. Nell and Captain W. A. Nell, of Highwood Park, Mill Hill, London, who is to be married in January to Mr. Patrick Galvani, only son of Mr. Dino Galvani and Mrs. J. Percy, of 106 Froggnal, Hampstead



Navana

*Miss Sheila Noel Vera Waud*, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Christopher W. H. P. Waud, of Bombay and Camberley, who is to marry Major John Desmond Goddard, M.C., R.A., only son of Mr. and Mrs. John Goddard, of Bombay and Gerards Cross



Hay Wrightson

*Miss Elizabeth Ursula Forster Wise*, elder daughter of Captain and Mrs. A. F. Wise, of 89 Winchester Court, London, W.8, who is to marry Mr. Michael Evan Victor Baillie, elder son of the late Brigadier the Hon. G. E. M. Baillie, M.C. and of Lady Maud Baillie, C.B.E., of Ballindarroch, Inverness



*Miss Ann Whitcombe*, elder daughter of Lieut.-Colonel A. C. Whitcombe, R.A., and Mrs. Whitcombe, of Sea View, Isle of Wight, who is engaged to Captain Richard Norman Ohlenschlager, R.A., 6th Airborne Division, younger son of the late Commander N. A. G. Ohlenschlager and of Mrs. C. H. d'Arch Smith, of Wallington Lodge, Fareham, Hants



Pearl Freeman

*Miss Ann Buckingham*, only daughter of Mr. C. de Vere Buckingham, of White Lodge, Speenhamland, Newbury, who is to marry Lieutenant Peter Strobe Smith, Royal Marines, only son of Major and Mrs. C. N. Strobe Smith, of Eastney Barracks, Portsmouth



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victory which has been granted to us, and in the knowledge that the present Silver Lining Campaign will play a vital part in the reconstruction and rebuilding of our country."



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# Oliver Sturges on FLYING

CAPTAIN A. G. LAMPLUGH had a happy inspiration in arranging for a presentation to be made by people in British aviation to Mr. Leslie Irvin before he left for America. Leslie Irvin is in a remarkable position in that he not only pioneered the idea of the free parachute, not only demonstrated it himself by making jumps, but also undertook its production on the immense scale of today.

When making the presentation Lamplugh said that some 20,000 Allied airmen owed their lives to Irvin's work, but in fact the number recorded at Letchworth is now over 30,000. The silver salver—which by the way is of really first-class workmanship and design, with some wonderful decoration round the edge—had, embossed, the famous caterpillar.

That Caterpillar Club idea was one of the great brainwaves. Every airman who has saved his life by parachute can apply for the small caterpillar badge (originally they were made of gold) as a memento. He must submit proof, which usually takes the form of a report from his commanding officer. I believe that the keeping of these records has entailed a good deal of work at Letchworth, but that the filing system (unlike my own) is so sound that the history of any member of the Caterpillars can be turned up in a few moments.

## Explanation Wanted

I REMEMBER the time when the Royal Flying Corps did not carry parachutes, and in fact all my own air fighting was done in those days. I also remember that German pilots were given parachutes. Our own Service did not have them because, in one of the biggest mistakes ever made, the Air Staff decided that they would not be "good" for our pilots. Parachutes existed and had been shown to work under war conditions.

It is my conviction that civil aviation is going through a rather similar period to that which military

aviation went through when I was an active war pilot. It is resisting the use of parachutes for no adequate reason. It has some vague idea that it would not be "good" for the passengers if they were to be provided with parachutes.

But that they will eventually be so provided I am certain. If we had many competing air lines in Britain today, one of them would probably already have decided to fit parachutes as standard.

## Tailless or Not?

WHETHER the future lies with the tailless aircraft is becoming less certain every day. I remember Air Commodore Whittle, some years ago, remarking that what we really want in aviation is not an all-wing aircraft, but an all-body aircraft, the body being the useful part. And it now seems that he may prove right.

Could one but arrange for a sufficiently low landing speed without wings, there would be a change to the rocket type of vehicle almost immediately. Wings are becoming a nuisance when high speeds are sought. But we shall not be able to do without them for low speeds. We seem to be returning to the ideal of the old pioneers, the retractable wing.

Meanwhile it would be pleasant to know more about the work that is going on in this country with rocket motors. We have heard almost nothing officially. Yet the Germans were using rocket motors for operational purposes before the end of the war. America has a number of rocket motors under trial. Where are the British rocket motors? Who is making them? What size are they? What fuels do they use? In what aircraft are they fitted? Nobody knows the answers to those questions at the moment.

If the Ministry of Supply were challenged, I imagine that they would reply that such matters were a deadly secret and must not be mentioned in public. But that is a feeble sort of excuse seeing that we all know

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that the Germans were ahead in this field and that the German rocket motors are probably still the best in the world.

## Birds and Aircraft

BIRDS are being freely described as a "menace" to aircraft. It makes one wonder whether some people might not choose to describe aircraft as a menace to birds. At some of the big aerodromes, especially in Ireland, the birds are so numerous that the risks of hitting one when an aircraft takes off or lands are large.

In the old days, when all aircraft were slow, birds could get out of the way; but they cannot do so with some of the faster modern machines. Hence the falconer and the idea that the control of birds at aerodromes can best be achieved by means of falcons.

Ordinarily it is not possible to do much to save the birds. So aircraft have two unpleasant things to answer for, first the slaughter of trees in the region of aerodromes and, second, the slaughter of birds. But who bothers about birds or trees nowadays? To local councils and Government departments a tree is merely a useless sort of thing which must be cut down. They do not know of any other purpose for it.

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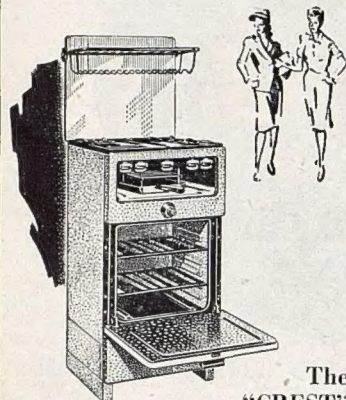
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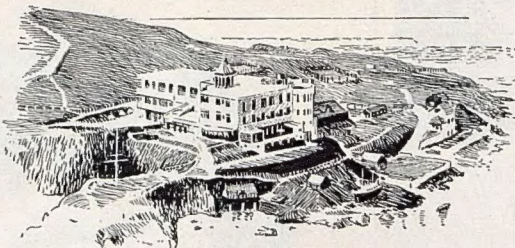
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Two Serocalcin tablets are taken daily for 30 days. In many cases this gives 3 to 4 months' immunity from colds.

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Serocalcin is available in two sizes; 60 tablets for the immunising course and 20 for treatment.

All who suffer from colds are invited to send to Harwoods Laboratories Ltd., Watford for descriptive booklet "Immunity from Colds."

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